



글 이대성
그림 animato

KING SHURA

BOOK 02

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King Shura

(수라왕)

by

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Synopsis

Cho Ryu Hyang was good at math from a young age.

When he enrolled into the The Theoretical Maths and Martial Arts School, the teacher, Jo Gi Chun, recognized Cho Ryu Hyang's talent immediately and took him in.

One day, Cho Ry Hyang found a book in the library known as the "Moon Edge Flower Algorithm Magic".

Through the book, he met a legendary individual known as Zhuge Liang...

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Chapter 51. Neng Ha Young's Guardian

“Young lady, something troublesome has happened.”

“What is it?”

“I’m afraid you’ll have to see this for yourself.”

When Neng Ha Young stuck her face out the carriage, she could see about twenty men wearing masks.

“Get off the carriage, bitch.”

Every one of them were equipped with a weapon, and they were all releasing their killing intent at Neng Ha Young.

“Do you know who I am?”

“Of course we do, you dirty witch! To think a person like you would travel in the open like this..... is this not a chance sent to us from the heavens? Kuhahaha!”

Neng Ha Young faintly smiled, and walked out of the carriage.

“Why are you wearing masks? Is there a use in wearing one if you’re going to kill me anyway?”

“Shut up! I’ll be sure to pull out that filthy tongue from your head first.”

Neng Ha Young didn’t even flinch when she heard that. Instead, she just calmly analyzed the men in front of her.

“You people from the Alliance are trying really hard to catch me, aren’t you.”

The men, who had been approaching the carriage slowly, all simultaneously flinched.

“Isn’t this too obvious? After all, this is the Alliance’s territory. And.....”

Neng Ha Young coldly glanced at the men, and spoke.

“The only enemy I have who would do something as idiotic as this would be the Alliance.”

“You, you bitch!”

“Did you really think that I am alone?”

“.....!”

The men immediately stopped approaching Neng Ha Young.

Come to think of it, it was indeed strange. Why would a person like her travel alone in the heart of enemy territory.....?

While the men just stood there not knowing what to do, the man who seemed to be the leader ground his teeth and spoke.

“You truly are a crafty woman. To think you’d try to trick us just like that..... but did you really think we’d fall for it?”

Neng Ha Young stared at the man, and smiled.

“No matter where you go, there are always some people who just don’t trust anything. Like you.”

“Shut up!”

The man charged at Neng Ha Young with a shout. But Neng Ha Young just stared at the charging man without even moving a single step.

Paa—

A sword was slashed, and a flower of blood bloomed in the air. But the blood did not come from Neng Ha Young. The man’s head had been cleanly cut off.

When everyone in the scene made a face of bewilderment, a man appeared in front of Neng Ha Young like a shadow. It was a

handsome young man who possessed an unusually pale skin.

The man pushed away the falling corpse, and looked around with a cold glare. While everyone's gaze was directed at him, the man quietly straightened one of his hands to form a spear hand.

The moment when everyone made a face of confusion looking at that.

Pyut—

The man slashed at the air with that hand once. And that was the end. Everyone that had been previously surrounding the carriage was sliced in half.

Tududuk—

A handful of destroyed corpses began to fall on the floor.

“Hi, hiii!”

Neng Ha Young opened her mouth, while the driver screamed out at the horrifying sight that beheld him.

“Finally. It's nice to meet you.”

“.....”

“I did think you would show yourself when I got into danger.”

“.....You were too reckless. What would you have done if you actually got hurt?”

Neng Ha Young smiled and pointed at a hill far away.

“I’m not as reckless as you might think. There are people on my side over there. They would’ve come if I just gave the signal.”

Just when did she prepare all this? He stayed with her at all times, and yet he still did not realize she had been scheming such things. The man’s eyes began to be filled with a complex feeling.

‘When did she realize?’

Seeing that she executed the plan like this, the girl had probably known about his existence from a long time ago.

She really was amazing. He didn’t give away anything that might’ve hinted his existence, and yet she still noticed him.

“You probably know quite a bit about me, so how about you tell me a bit about yourself instead?”

The man thought for a bit. Should he tell her? Wouldn’t she be surprised? While he had been thinking that, Neng Ha Young

opened her mouth.

“I have a good idea of where you came from. I just want to know your name.”

Shi Yup became quite astonished when he heard this.

He heard of her intelligence from some rumors, and saw a glimpse of it every now and then, but he never realized that she was this smart. The man acknowledged her intelligence and began to introduce himself.

“Shi Yup (視曄) . My name is Shi Yup.”

The Night Emperor Neng Mu Gi. This was the appearance of the emperor's only disciple.



When the Administrator erased the formation Cho Ryu Hyang drew on the ground.

Ding—

The strange pearl inside Cho Ryu Hyang's dantian began to move on its own, and Cho Ryu Hyang began to see something strange.

‘Huh?’

Cho Ryu Hyang's eyes shook as the Administrator in front of him faded away. At the same time, a certain scene began to play out in Cho Ryu Hyang's mind.

‘This is.....’

These were the past memories of Administrator Un Hui.

Starting from the time when the Administrator passed the Prison of Life and Death, all the way to the part where he made the promise with the Pope. All the important events in the Administrator's life began to flow into Cho Ryu Hyang's mind.

While Cho Ryu Hyang was just standing there experiencing the strange event, the Administrator spoke up.

“Are..... are you alright?”

Cho Ryu Hyang came back to his senses when he heard the Administrator's question. For a very short time, a fraction of the memories of the Administrator flowed into Cho Ryu Hyang's mind.

‘What was that?’

It was definitely the memories of Administrator Un Hui. But why did those memories just come into his mind like that?

Ding—

The pearl that was moving around in its own in his dantian. Actually, it felt like Cho Ryu Hyang had an experience similar to this in the past.

‘Just when was that?’

When he thought about it for a while, he could remember. When he received the Moon Edge Blade Technique and the strange pearl from the dragon and fainted, he became a white butterfly and met his teacher, Gongson Chun Gi.

It was at the time where his teacher blew away Baek Mu Ryang with a single strike. The feeling he felt back then as a butterfly was similar to what he had been feeling just now.

The feeling that gave him a sense of looking back into the past or into the future.

‘Just what is this.....’

The thing that was moving around on its own in his dantian.

Just what was this thing?

“I will go call a doctor.”

When the Administrator stood up with a concerned glint in his eyes, Cho Ryu Hyang quickly shook his head.

“No, there’s no need.”

“Truly? Your face is pale. It would do well to see a doctor.”

Cho Ryu Hyang wiped his forehead when he heard the Administrator’s words. It seemed that he sweat quite a bit without realizing it.

“I really am all right. I was just concentrating a little too much.”

Cho Ryu Hyang glanced at the Administrator as he talked. The way he looked at the Administrator had changed, unlike before.

‘A person even teacher acknowledged.....’

The man was amazing. Not only did he reach the harmonious stage at such a young age, but he was also able to stay confident when facing Gongson Chun Gi.

If Cho Ryu Hyang hadn’t appeared, the man could’ve actually become the next heir of the church.

‘But.....’

The Administrator was doubting Cho Ryu Hyang's ability. Even though teacher had selected him, the Administrator held immense suspicion in his heart.

Since a bit of the man's memories flowed into Cho Ryu Hyang, he could understand why the Administrator was feeling such things. He understood.

After all, he'd feel the same if he was put in the same spot as the administrator. Of course he wouldn't acknowledge a person like that, especially when that person was just a child.

‘What should I do?’

Cho Ryu Hyang wanted to be acknowledged. There might've been no point in making the Administrator acknowledge him, but still, Cho Ryu Hyang wanted to be acknowledged. But just what should he do to gain the Administrator's recognition?

When he looked around for a bit, he could see the formation that he had been drawing on the ground. The formation that the Administrator erased.

The man probably erased it because it was the destruction technique for the formation that was set here. When Cho Ryu Hyang saw that, he was immediately struck by an entertaining idea.

“Administrator.”

“.....Yes, Young Lord.”

The Administrator flinched when Cho Ryu Hyang called at him in a low voice. Even if the Bloody River Heaven Destroying Sword Formation was one of the greatest secrets of the church, he had obstructed the work of the heir, of all things.

This was, of course, a grave sin. The Administrator could even be accused for treachery, and he wouldn't be able to do anything about it.

‘Just what is he going to say.....’

Un Hui waited for Cho Ryu Hyang to speak again with an anxious heart. Cho Ryu Hyang, who had taken off his glasses, opened his mouth.

“Let's make a bet.”

Bet? Why? Un Hui was unable to say anything because this was so sudden. Cho Ryu Hyang, who seemed oblivious to what Un Hui was feeling, just smiled.

“How is it?”

“.....”

This was troublesome. Un Hui was unable to discern the boy's motives for doing this.

And because he was feeling a little bit guilty right now, it was really hard for him to predict Cho Ryu Hyang's moves.

“.....I don't know what you are trying to say.”

“You just did something you shouldn't have done, am I correct?”

“.....”

Un Hui didn't speak. It seemed that this kid really wasn't going to let his actions go.

“If you take the bet, I'll pretend to not have seen your actions, how is it?”

Un Hui made a serious face when he heard this. At first glance, a bet like this where your sins could be forgiven seemed really attractive.

But Un Hui had to be careful. A sweet offer like this usually brought big troubles with it. But.....

‘There's no way to get out.’

If that kid did anything to him in the future, there would be no way for him to avoid it. Un Hui looked at Cho Ryu Hyang with a bitter face and spoke.

“It’s not something that I can refuse, is it?”

“The conditions should be pretty appealing.”

“I’ll take it.”

When Un Hui took up the bet, Cho Ryu Hyang smiled and put on his glasses. Things have gone the way he wanted it so far. Right then, Un Hui spoke.

“What kind of a bet do you want?”

Cho Ryu Hyang didn’t respond. After pausing for a bit, Cho Ryu Hyang spoke with a smile on his face.

“Before that, I think we should choose what we’re putting at stake here.”

What was that about? Un Hui made a confused expression as he spoke up in response.

“We’re choosing what we’re going to bet even before settling on what kind of a bet this is?”

Cho Ryu Hyang's actions seemed illogical. But the boy just nodded, and spoke as he pointed at the ground.

“The Heavenly Demon Church. If you win, the church would be yours.”

–The Heavenly Demon Church. If you win, I'll give you this.

For a second, Un Hui could hear the Pope's voice from a decade ago simultaneously with Cho Ryu Hyang's voice.

“.....”

Un Hui, who became a little dazed after hearing that, became furious.

‘This arrogant little brat.....’

Did the Pope tell the boy? Un Hui felt some suspicion for a second, but he immediately dispelled the thought. There was no way. The Pope wasn't a person who'd talk about such things this easily.

Then just how did this boy know about the bet between him and the Pope? Did Guardian Ju tell the boy?

But that was even more improbable than the Pope telling the boy about the bet. This was something related to the Pope himself. Ju

Sang San wasn't idiotic enough to talk about the Pope's past carelessly.

‘Anyways, you just touched a subject you shouldn't have touched.’

A hot feeling of rage surged up in Un Hui's chest. It felt like his precious memory with the Pope was being dirtied by this boy. Un Hui grit his teeth as he spoke in a low voice.

“I will bet myself, young lord. I will bet the remainder of my life here.”

He bet the same thing he bet in the past. But this time, he won't lose. The Un Hui of now wouldn't be able to lose to anything anyone would bet.

Cho Ryu Hyang, not caring a bit about Un Hui's thoughts, grinned and stretched out his fist towards Un Hui.

“A man's words?”

Un Hui looked at Cho Ryu Hyang's little fist with a twisted face. This kid really knew about the bet from the past, didn't he?

Un Hui thought about all this just being a coincidence, but that didn't seem like the case. The boy knew about the exchange between him and the Pope, and was provoking him.

Un Hui looked at the fist with a complicated face, then soon sighed and put his fist against Cho Ryu Hyang's.

“.....is worth a thousand gold.”

Cho Ryu Hyang stared into the furious eyes of Un Hui, and opened his mouth.

“I'll tell you about the bet now. If you don't like it, you don't have to take it.”

“Alright.”

Un Hui was actually thinking of doing whatever the boy told him to do. He wanted to crush the boy.

Cho Ryu Hyang slowly walked to a open field in the garden they were in, and opened his mouth.

“You just have to attack me using the formation that is set up here.”

“.....?”

Un Hui couldn't comprehend Cho Ryu Hyang's words for a second. Use the formation? Did the boy just tell him to attack using the Bloody River Heaven Destroying Sword Formation with his

subordinates?

“I want to bet on whether I can destroy this formation or not. How does that sound?”

Un Hui's eyes turned ice cold. It seems he really didn't misunderstand. This boy here really was talking nonsense.

His lips turned up into a grin. If there was one thing that defined the boy that the Pope brought along this time, it was this: arrogance.

It would be good to teach this boy a lesson using this chance. Un Hui opened his mouth with a calm face.

“This is an unfair bet. I cannot take it.”

Cho Ryu Hyang flinched, and scrunched up his nose. He didn't expect the other side to refuse. Then, Un Hui faintly smiled and spoke up.

“The bet needs to be edited a little bit.”

“Edit?”

“Yes. I will not take part in the formation. And.....”

Kakakak—!

When Un Hui lightly waved his hand, a big circle appeared in the field with Cho Ryu Hyang at the center.

“I’ll admit my defeat as long as you come out of that circle. How does that sound?”

Cho Ryu Hyang looked around a bit, then spoke.

“If you want it to be that way, sure.”

Un Hui coldly smiled.

“The bet has been made.”

The moment Un Hui finished that sentence, he held up one of his hand. He then pointed at Cho Ryu Hyang.

Then, a hundred martial artists who were in hiding all simultaneously charged at Cho Ryu Hyang like a black wave.

Chapter 52. Betting The Heavenly Demon Church

There are majorly two types of formations in the world.

The first type is made by considering the natural variables of the world. Once these variables are measured and taken into consideration, one would create a nucleus of the formation, and based on that, the creator would seal the power of heaven and earth into the nucleus in order to create a manmade space.

The second type would be a military formation. This was a formation fully composed of human beings, and these type of formations often did not have a set shape.

Because of that, these formations could often change shapes, and would be harder to predict because of that. That's where the power of the military formations lie.

‘A Bloody River Heaven Destroying Sword Formation used by a peak expert could potentially kill even a harmonious expert.’

The martial artists who were guarding the Grass Shoe Garden. Most of them were first-rate experts. There were also several peak experts planted in the formation who were there to command the others.

[Zhu Ying (竹影).]

[Yes, sir.]

[Strike lightly, enough to keep the boy alive..... no, hit him as hard as possible, but keep the boy alive.]

[Understood.]

Un Hui sent out his orders, and began to observe his surroundings. Honestly, he thought that his bet with Cho Ryu Hyang was just nonsensical.

The boy didn't look like he practiced martial arts. Well, even if he did, it'd be useless.....

'The Bloody River Heaven Destroying Sword Formation is just perfect.'

Based on his knowledge, unless a person had a strength that rivaled that of the Pope's, there was no way to break through the formation. Even Un Hui, a person that knew so much about the formation itself, couldn't.

'I don't know why you made this kind of a bet, but.....'

It would be good to teach the boy a lesson using this chance.

'The martial world isn't as easy as you think, boy.'

Even if that boy has immense talent like the Pope described, the boy's power would only come to fruition in the future. Right now, this boy didn't have any power.

While Un Hui had been imagining Cho Ryu Hyang in a beat-up state, Cho Ryu Hyang slowly inhaled and looked at the people coming at him.

‘42, 46, 44.....’

After figuring out the basic power of the people coming at him using the Faultless View of The World, Cho Ryu Hyang took another breath and walked forward. Un Hui's eyebrows twitched when he saw that.

‘What's this?’

He had a bad premonition. He couldn't tell what it was, but he felt that something was wrong just now from Cho Ryu Hyang's actions. Right after that, Un Hui began to tilt his head in confusion.

That was because Cho Ryu Hyang was just casually walking out of the formation.

Shuaaa-!

Multiple swords struck out simultaneously with a bone-chilling sound. None of these swords, however, struck Cho Ryu Hyang.

Every single one of the swords missed Cho Ryu Hyang by mere millimeters. Un Hui, looking at that, widened his eyes in surprise.

‘This can’t be real!’

Were his subordinates missing on purpose? Un Hui shook his head. There was no way they’d do that. But for some reason, none of the sword strikes hit Cho Ryu Hyang.

‘Just how?’

It wasn’t that Cho Ryu Hyang was dodging these blades with extreme speed. The boy was simply moving around amongst all the martial artists with strange, slow steps.

Sometimes he’d go forward, sometimes backward, then turn sideways. And sometimes, for some reason, the boy would stand in place for a moment, twist his body sideways, then walk forward.

Whenever the boy did that, the attacks performed by Un Hui’s subordinates would miss.



‘What the hell is this?’

Was this some sort of sorcery? There was no way to explain this scene without calling it sorcery. That was because Cho Ryu Hyang’s movements didn’t contain any kind of pattern at all.

Forget about first-rate experts. Even peak experts were unable to even leave a scratch on the boy. Just how was this happening?

And besides that, there was something even more troublesome

happening.

‘The formation is breaking?’

Little by little, the formation was crumbling. The formation was starting to break while trying to match Cho Ryu Hyang’s movements.

When Un Hui noticed that and frowned, Cho Ryu Hyang staggered a little as he bowed down.

Pyut–

At the same time, a single sword through the spot where Cho Ryu Hyang’s body had been.

‘Dangerous!’

Un Hui was about to stop his subordinates, then paused. His subordinates were beginning to act impatiently.

That sort of thing could break the entire formation even faster. But.....

‘That attack just now worked.’

Un Hui’s eyes sparkled. Cho Ryu Hyang’s clothing was but

normal. This was good. And with that just now, Un Hui was able to figure something out.

‘The boy’s overexerting himself.’

Un Hui quickly organized his thoughts after seeing Cho Ryu Hyang’s body, which was drenched in sweat.

He didn’t know much about what that brat was planning on doing. To be honest, he didn’t have a clue.

But he knew that this boy in his eyes was clearly exhausted. It was obvious when he heard the boy’s rough breathing, and saw the sweat glistening on the boy’s body.

‘We haven’t put a single scratch on the boy so far, but.....’

Things will be different starting now. After all, he figured out a way to deal with Cho Ryu Hyang.

[Zhu Ying.]

[Yes, sir.]

[Change the formation from the Attack (攻) stance to the Undoing (解) stance.]

[But if we do that.....]

[I know. The formation would start to break.]

Unlike the Attack stance, which focused on keeping everything in order, the Undoing stance would grant each martial artist a designated area, an area in which a martial artist could move around freely.

In such a stance, the formation would naturally begin to break by itself.

[But even if we just left everything as is, the formation would still break. I don't want to admit it, but that's what's going to happen. The Undoing stance is the only way to catch that kid.]

[Understood.]

Just now, the attack that barely managed to touch Cho Ryu Hyang was a random attack performed by one of his subordinates. Cho Ryu Hyang clearly became agitated at that moment. When Un Hui saw that, he realized that the answer to defeating Cho Ryu Hyang lay there.

‘Boy, it seems that you had something you could rely on. But that all ends here.’

That boy almost reached the edge of the circle that was drawn on the ground. But for some reason, the boy wouldn't go across the

circle.

‘The boy’s just a step away from the outside, so why?’

While Un Hui had been making a confused expression, Cho Ryu Hyang had been biting his lips out of anxiousness.

‘Shoot.’

Cho Ryu Hyang’s face was beginning to show a trace of agitation. The idea to use the Faultless View of The World in order to face the formation was good.

When Cho Ryu Hyang used the Faultless View, he was able to see the entire shape of the formation just by glancing at a single person. Using this, going through the formation was like solving problems while knowing the answer itself.

He was able to tell exactly where the next attacks would be. Thanks to that, he was able to dodge the attacks coming at him just by observing the tiny movements from a single person.

With this method, he was able to dodge the fast attacks with slow movements. But at this point, he was unable to move as easily as before.

Even when he used the Faultless Vision, he was unable to see the exit. Even when he neared the edge of the circle, he was unable to move outside.

‘What should I do.....’

The Faultless Vision showed that there were no exits in front of him. That meant he was unable to exit the circle with just a single move. Then there was only one other option he could take.

‘I have to go around the circle.’

It was quite troublesome to move around the circle again, inside the formation. That was because of the oppressive aura that constantly pressured Cho Ryu Hyang’s body.

It felt like he had lead bars strapped to his legs whenever he took a single step. Cho Ryu Hyang could begin to taste blood in his mouth.

An untrained body. That untrained body of his was beginning to show its limits. It would be hard starting now. He had to get out of the formation before his strength left him.

Right then.

Whoosh–!

Suddenly, the feeling of oppression that surrounded Cho Ryu Hyang began to thin. His body began to feel lighter. But Cho Ryu Hyang’s expression simply got darker when he began to look

around.

‘The shape of the formation changed? Why?’

This wasn’t a good sign. He felt something bad from all this. When Cho Ryu Hyang sensed something and turned around, he could see Un Hui standing outside the formation.

When their eyes met, Cho Ryu Hyang readjusted his glasses and frowned.

‘This is his trump card.’

His instincts warned him of danger. At this rate, he was going to get caught. In a moment, a net specifically designed to capture him would be created.

‘Just what was the problem?’

Did he use too much time? Of course, that must’ve been one of the problems, but Cho Ryu Hyang found that the root of the problem lay elsewhere.

‘I overlooked the Administrator too much.’

If the Administrator was in the formation, he would’ve failed to notice that the formation was being destroyed.

But the man was observing the formation from the outside. Because of that, he was able to get a good look at the entire formation.

He had found Cho Ryu Hyang's weakness, and changed the formation in order to target Cho Ryu Hyang's weakness.

‘That child's movement is slow and unrefined. He doesn't have much stamina, either.’

He didn't know how the boy managed to move around the formation like that. It seemed like the boy had a special method or skill, but that didn't matter anymore.

His subordinates will now take up their respective area and guard it, in order to create a perfect net. For Cho Ryu Hyang, a person who didn't know martial arts at all, this net would be impossible to break through.

Did he not confirm the effectiveness of this strategy earlier? Uncoordinated attacks towards Cho Ryu Hyang would surely make their way through eventually.

‘Looks like I won the bet, boy.’

When Un Hui put up a victorious face, Cho Ryu Hyang had to quickly make a decision. He had to find a way to get out before the new stance of the formation was completed.

‘Two people.....’

Cho Ryu Hyang had to go through two experts in order to get out of the formation in the shortest amount of time. Cho Ryu Hyang deactivated the Faultless Vision with a bitter face. Then, he stood in place and took a deep breath.

Un Hui, looking at that, clenched his fist.

‘This brat.....’

Un Hui knew what the boy’s expression meant. That was the face a person put on when he/she was not assured of their victory, but could see a chance of winning.

‘He’s gambling.’

Just how would the boy try to get out? Un Hui began to observe Cho Ryu Hyang as carefully as possible, by focusing every one of his senses on the boy.

Then.

“Hooo.....”

Cho Ryu Hyang exhaled the air from inside his body, inhaled deeply, then stopped moving for a second.

“Mm?”

Un Hui noticed a small patch of light that appeared inside Cho Ryu Hyang’s eyes.

‘The boy has inner strength? He actually practiced martial arts?’

It didn’t look like the boy practiced martial arts at all, so what was going on? Un Hui quickly tried to change the formation yet again, but Cho Ryu Hyang was a step faster than he was.

Chapter 53. The Star Of The North Sea Ice Palace

“What are you doing, senior?”

“Mm? Can’t you see? I’m looking at myself in a mirror.”

“Wait. Weren’t you using that thing since a while back?”

“Fufu, of course! After all, you just can’t get tired of this face of mine.”

“.....”

“These beautiful black eyebrows, skin like silk, and this luscious black hair. Add to that, a body perfectly balanced out without any excess fat! Kya– even a god would be jealous of my body. Don’t you think so?”

“.....What do you want to hear from me?”

“Fufu, what would an ugly girl like you know about this senior’s deep anguish?”

The man who had been staring at the mirror with a happy face since a while back. This man’s name was Chi Xie Ming (赤血明).

“Fuu..... so this is why master told me to keep an eye on you.”

“Mm? Why?”

“You’re immature, unlike your appearance.”

“What?”

The woman stuck out her tongue and ran away. That woman’s name was Ju Da Hye (朱多慧). Looking at Ju Da Hye running away like the wind, Chi Xie Ming smirked.



“Trying to run away from me... well, the attempt is kind of praiseworthy.”

Chi Xie Ming said this as he put his right hand up. He then smirked a little, and grabbed the thin air. After doing so, he jerked his right hand back violently.

“A, ahh! Senior! It hurts!”

“Fufu, your attempt was praiseworthy, but you picked the wrong

opponent this time. So today, I'll take my time to teach you a lesson myself."

"D, did you forget what our master told you to do? You're going to be late if you don't go now, you know?"

Chi Xie Ming, who had been pulling on his junior's cheeks with an evil face, made a confused expression.

"Mm? Late?"

"Yeah, you only have an hour left."

Chi Xie Ming was greatly surprised when he heard the junior's words.

"What! Already? Damn, wait downstairs. I'll be out as soon as possible."

Chi Xie Ming hurriedly packed up. This kind of a thing always happened.

It's not the first time he got too absorbed in looking at himself that he got scolded by his master for being late.

'Haa... the heavens are too harsh on me. Why couldn't they make me a little less perfect?'

When Chi Xie Ming walked outside thinking this, he was greeted by two horses. Ju Da Hye handed him one of the reins and spoke up.

“If you arrive late to the meeting again, master’s probably gonna go grind you up.”

“Fufu, you think I will just stand there and take that?”

“Instead of saying something like that to me, why don’t you go say that to master instead?”

“Are you interested in my position as a senior?”

“No.”

“Then why are you trying to kill me by using master?”

“W, when did I ever try that?”

“Now. You tried to do it now, you cocky little girl.”

Chi Xie Ming said this as he pinched one of Ju Da Hye’s cheek’s and pulled on it. Ju Da Hye began to shout loudly as she tapped on the horse’s head out of pain.

“Ahh! Sorry, senior. I won’t do it again, so please let go!”

“Hm. Well, it won’t be good if your ugly face gets even uglier. My eyes would rot if that happened.”

When Chi Xie Ming let go with a disappointed face, Ju Da Hye quickly ran ahead and shouted at Chi Xie Ming.

“I, I’m going to go tell on you!”

“Fufu, aren’t you afraid of my revenge?”

The two fought like this as they neared the meeting place, the First Sichuan Building (四川第一樓)

“You’re late.”

“Sorry, master. The roads were kind of rough. Plus, it was our first time coming here, right? Hahaha.”

When Chi Xie Ming said this, Ju Da Hye pouted a little as if she was discontent with the man’s response.

“I’ll do the interrogations later. But first, hurry. The guests are already here.”

“Alright.”

“Go into the house and get your uniforms. You should know just how important this meeting is.”

“Yes, sir.”

Chi Xie Ming and Ju Da Hye both wore their respective clothing and came out.

It was a simple black robe that didn't seem very special at all. But on the sleeves and the left chest, there was a white dragon imprinted on the robe.

A mark of the white dragon. Currently, in the mainland, there were no martial clans that used that symbol.

No, there couldn't be any martial clans that did that. After all, this symbol of the white dragon was a symbol of a giant force in the continent.

“Let's go.”

“Yes, senior.”

When the two arrived at the house their master was residing in, they could find their master meditating.

“Ming (明).”

“Yes, master.”

“Don’t forget. This meeting here was done specifically for you. Also, observe our guests properly. They’re going to become our enemies in the future.”

Chi Xie Ming smiled, and nodded.

“Fufu, don’t worry, master. Don’t you know I’m a man who’s used to the main character role already? I’ll go boost the main palace’s reputation with this meeting. I’ll go pressure our guests with my imposing strength.”

“.....”

Ju Da Hye looked at Chi Xie Ming with eyes filled with distrust.

“Eh? Junior, what’s up with those eyes? You don’t trust me? Really?”

“No way, senior. Why would I ever do that?”

“Haha, right, right. Looks like I misunderstood. I almost punched you because of that. Try not to use that face next time. It makes me angry.”

The two began to argue in front of their master without any

reserve.

Chi Xie Ming's master. He was an old man who ruled the North Sea, the man known as the White Ice Emperor (冰白大帝). He was one of the external forces of the continent.

He was the master of the North Sea Ice Palace (北海冰宮), Dam Chun Hoo (曇天后).

“Let's stop the playing here, and leave. The guests are waiting.”

“Yes, master.”

The three stood up and walked towards the gazebo in the back garden. There, they could see someone. They could see people who were exuding a wild aura that befit barbarians. There were three in total.

The middle aged man in the group, who possessed a strange tattoo on his face, walked to Dam Chun Hoo and stretched out his hand.

“It's nice to meet you. I am Gu Ma Byuk.”

Dam Chun Hoo looked at the man in front of him for a while, then nodded. Indeed this man in front of him had the right to be here.

“The name’s Dam Chun Hoo.”

The two shook hands, then looked at each other for a moment. Something stirred inside them when they met each other, but now was not the time.

The two knew that very well. Gu Ma Byuk looked away first with a small smile. Then, he opened his mouth and began talking.

“This boy here’s my eldest child, Gu Hui. He’s the current heir of our clan. The boy next to him would be my second child.”

“Really.....”

Dam Chun Hoo was quite surprised when he saw Gu Hui. The boy had talent that rivaled even Chi Xie Ming.

The old sayings say that the Nanman was a big place, but if the place was great enough to produce beings as terrifying as this, the people of Nanman really couldn’t be looked down upon for being savages.

But that was where everything ended. Dam Chun Hoo made a relaxed face. When it came to heirs, the one he had here was competent enough.

“This one here’s my first disciple, Chi Xie Ming. The girl next to him is my youngest disciple I brought along.”

Gu Ma Byuk took a look at Chi Xie Ming, nodded, and then smiled at Ju Da Hye.

“I really must thank you for bringing me a child as cute as this. She really looks quite nice.”

“Haha, thank you.”

While those two began to engage in small talk, Gu Hui and Chi Xie Ming stared into each other's faces.

The two couldn't notice anything around them at the moment, other than the person in front of them.

‘This guy.....’

Chi Xie Ming was able to feel some excitement thanks to the beastly aura that came from Gu Hui's body.

This ticklish feeling that made him feel like there were ants crawling all over him. It has been a while since he felt that.

He had previously thought that there were no enemies who could fight him in his age group, but it seemed that he was wrong.

Chi Xie Ming's eyes began to get filled with fighting spirit, as if he had forgotten all about the meeting that was taking place. The

same went for Gu Hui.

Normally, Gu Hui was filled with arrogance, but now he was just staring at Chi Xie Ming with eyes full of fighting spirit. And after looking at each other for a long time, the two thought of the same thing.

‘This guy’s a rival I’ll have to fight for life.’

Their strengths were on par with each other. An expert of their caliber usually played out fights in their head in order to determine a winner beforehand.

But in their heads, there was no clear winner. They would have to fight in real life in order to determine the real winner.

When Chi Xie Ming began to twitch while thinking that, Dam Chun Hoo softly grabbed onto his shoulder.

“Did you forget why we came here? Don’t be rude to our guests.”

“.....Yes master.”

Chi Xie Ming calmed himself, and put his hand away from his sword. He then grinned at Gu Hui.

‘We’ll fight in the future anyhow.’

Gu Hui smiled at Chi Xie Ming with the same thought. There really was no need to try to fight each other as soon as possible. In the present, their teachers were keeping things in order, but the teachers would soon retire.

Once that happened, the world would be theirs.

Fighting when that happens wouldn't be bad. Chi Xie Ming and Gu Hui relaxed their tense muscles as they settled down again.

“Did you read the message we sent you?”

“Of course.”

“What did you think about it?”

The master of the Nanman Beast Gate, Gu Ma Byuk, smiled.

“If you didn't send me that message, I would've been the one to send it to you.”

“Does that mean that you'd agree with the proposal?”

“The Demon Church of now cannot be defeated by a single power. Of course I would agree to your proposal.”

Dam Chun Hoo nodded. The Demon Church of the present age

was too powerful. It was unprecedentedly powerful, even. But its strength would be its downfall.

Even if the Church was uninterested in expanding into the mainland, the other powers of the continent wouldn't think that. Just having the Demon Church in the continent would make them feel fearful.

And fear is what binds multiple groups together.

“Three years. We need to get the Alliance and the Black Moon Guild to participate in at least three years.”

“Good idea.”

If four great powers in the continent bunched together to fight, even the Heavenly Demon Church wouldn't be able to take them on.

In the worst case, the church would be forced to fight against the whole of the martial world.

“We'll try to persuade the Alliance. Could you be the one to persuade the Black Moon Guild?”

“Alright. Unless they're idiots, they'll also join us in this event.”

“I leave it in your hands.”

First Sichuan Building. This was where the plot to take the whole of martial world into the path of chaos began.

Chapter 54. The Administrator's Oath

“It seems that you are busy.”

“No, not really.”

Baek So Chun, the master of the Ruling Fire House. She calmly guided her surprise visitor to a seat. That visitor naturally sat down on the seat, and spoke.

“I had some free time, so I decided to drop by. Ahri's doing fine, right?”

“Yes, Your Holiness.”

Gongson Chun Gi. He tucked his head and grinned.

“She doesn't go crying to try see me every night, does she?”

“.....Thankfully, that age seems to have passed now.”

“That's regrettable.”

Baek So Chun brought some fruits and sweets, and opened her mouth.

“To be honest, there was a little incident that happened a while

back.”

“An incident?”

“Ahri seemed to have got outside without permission to pay a visit to the Garden. Nothing major had happened, but.....”

Baek So Chun paused a bit, then spoke.

“Due to my lacking talents, I almost let your precious daughter suffer from something terrible. I apologize.”

“Hm.....”

Gongson Chun Gi’s eyes got thinner. When Baek So Chun saw this, she let loose a cold sweat and bowed down.

“.....I am willing to take any punishment.”

“So nothing happened?”

“Yes. Thanks to her guards that found her in time, nothing big happened, but.....”

“But?”

“It seems that the Young Lady met the Lord Heir in the Garden.

They even shared a conversation, but nothing eventful happened, thankfully.”

Gongson Chun Gi spoke as he began to tap his fingers restlessly.

“She met that child there?”

“Yes.”

“I’m getting quite interested. Call Ahri over.”

“Of course.”

Baek So Chun sent someone to bring Gongson Ahri. A few moments later, Gongson Ahri could be seen running towards them at full speed.

“Dad!”

“Oho! You’ve grown quite a bit, eh?”

Gongson Chun Gi hugged his daughter who had been running at him from his seat.

“Why didn’t you come over all this time? Were you busy?”

“Of course. Your daddy’s always busy, you know? By the way, it

looks like you didn't just grow tall during the time I haven't seen you. Looks like you got a bit weightier, too."

Gongson Ahri blushed a little, and lightly pushed Gongson Chun Gi away.

"Keke, you don't have to feel so ashamed. You're at the age where you start to grow up, after all."

Nod nod. Gongson Ahri vigorously nodded in agreement.

"Actually, some things happened, so I just went out for a bit. That's why I haven't been able to visit."

"Outside..... you mean the mainland?"

"Yeah. I went to the mainland."

Gongson Chun Gi bitterly smiled when he saw her daughter's gaze full of curiosity and reverence. That was because his daughter didn't know much about the mainland.

"When everything that's happening here blows over, let's go on a trip to the mainland. I'll show you some interesting stuff."

"Waa!"

While Gongson Ahri clapped her hands in excitement, Gongson Chun Gi stroked his daughter's hair and spoke.

“Ahri.”

“Yeah, dad?”

“There's something that's been bugging me since a while back, you know?”

“What is it?”

“You went to the Grass Shoe Garden, didn't you?”

“.....!”

Gongson Ahri jumped up in surprise, then began to send small glances at Baek So Chun. Looking at that, Gongson Chun Gi smirked and spoke up.

“Don't worry. I'm not here to punish you or anything. You went to the Garden, right?”

Gongson Ahri stared at Baek So Chun wordlessly for a moment, then nodded with an apologetic face.

“.....Yeah, I did.”

“That’s good. How was he, that boy? I was actually thinking of bringing him here. But you know, bringing him all the way here is a little troublesome.....”

The Ruling Fire House was a forbidden land for all men. Anyone who would step inside without permission would be killed on sight. Of course, the Pope was an exception to this rule.

“Who.....?”

Gongson Ahri tried to pretend to be innocent, but in front of Gongson Chun Gi, such acts were useless.

“.....Eh? That’s kind of suspicious, you know?”

“What? No! What do you mean?”

Gongson Ahri backed away more and more under the gaze of her father.

When Gongson Chun Gi wouldn’t yield with his gaze, Gongson Ahri slowly looked away from her father completely.

“.....Fine, I won’t ask much more about that now. Looks like things would get awkward if I try to pry more..... It might be better for me to stay ignorant, right?”

“.....Yeah.”

Gongson Chun Gi let out a tired sigh, which was unusual in itself, and spoke.

“So, how was it? Just tell me how you felt.”

What did he want? When Gongson Ahri let out a confused expression, Gongson Chun Gi opened his mouth yet again.

“Was it good, or bad?”

This was, again, a very vague question. The situation was a little awkward to say that it was good, but then she couldn't say it was bad, either. That's why Gongson Ahri chose to say the safest thing she could think of at the moment.

“.....It wasn't bad.”

“Hm..... To be specific?”

She didn't know what her father was going for, but when this question arrived, she answered immediately.

“His eyes..... were pretty.”

Gongson Chun Gi's eyes brightened.

‘Was, was I seen through?’

When Gongson Ahri flinched, her father spoke.

“How?”

How should she respond? After thinking a bit, Gongson Ahri decided to respond honestly.

“I, it was an eye I never saw before. I guess it was an eye that made me comfortable? Looking at it made me feel at peace.”

Gongson Chun Gi grinned when he heard his daughter’s words.

“I knew it.”

When Gongson Ahri made a confused face, Gongson Chun Gi stroked his daughter’s hair and spoke.

“It seems that you have the same type of eye that your mother had.”

“.....The same type of eye as my mom?”

“Yeah. It’s what we call ‘True Eyes’. Normally, you’d have to train like hell to get it, but some people are just born with it. Like

you. And your mom. ”

“.....”

“I wasn’t sure if you had it or not till now, but this made it clear. This is good.”

Gongson Chun Gi grinned happily as he stroked his daughter’s hair.

“This will definitely help you out in life.”

His daughter would definitely live longer than he. Gongson Chun Gi couldn’t keep taking care of her forever.

But as long as his daughter had something like this, living would be much easier for her. Thinking that just made Gongson Chun Gi happy.

“I’ll have to go see my disciple now. I left him there for a little too long.....”

Putting someone in an unfamiliar environment for a long time isn’t good.

No matter how calm and intelligent Cho Ryu Hyang was, he was still eleven. The boy needed to be cared for.

Plus, didn't the boy lose a teacher who was considered to be like his father? The boy really needed some help. When Gongson Chun Gi thought this much, he began to feel a bit hurried.

"I'll be back some other time. Don't do anything stupid till then, and stay put. Alright?"

"Yes, dad."

Gongson Chun Gi hugged his daughter tightly, then grinned at Baek So Chun as he spoke.

"I leave her to you."

"You do not have to worry, Your Holiness."

"You're the only one I can rely on."

Gongson Chun Gi left an afterimage as he looked at Baek So Chun bowing at him. He was moving faster than the wind itself to see his disciple.

'Coming here was good..... but what's going on here?'

The Garden was in a mess. He felt something going on a far away, so he sneaked in silently, but to think he'd see such a thing.....

‘The Bloody River Heaven Destroying Sword Formation.....’

For some reason, the Heaven Destroying Guardian Corps (守護滅天隊), who only existed to protect the Garden, was attacking Cho Ryu Hyang.

And surprisingly, the Administrator was just watching all this from the sidelines. Gongson Chun Gi didn’t know what happened, but the situation didn’t look too good.

Gongson Chun Gi thought of moving, then changed his mind, and sat down on the spot.

‘This is interesting.’

He knew that his disciple possessed Godly Eyes that were said to be unique even among unique eyes, but he didn’t know that it could be this powerful.

‘He can see the path?’

Gongson Chun Gi tucked his chin in his fist, and watched the battlefield with interest.

The boys at the Guardian Corps were moving violently, but they were still maintaining some calm. Because of that, Gongson Chun Gi could watch this whole thing without feeling any caution.

But even so, the difference of martial prowess between these people and his disciple was immense. Even then, the guardians of the garden couldn't touch Cho Ryu Hyang.

‘So that’s what the boy’s eyes are like? He’s using them in a unique way.’

He learned something good.

Gongson Chun Gi observed all this calmly, then suddenly flinched a bit. The formation was crumbling.

‘This is.....’

A military formation was, in the end, a formation set up by people. If the individuals in the formation get shaken, the formation would break.

Cho Ryu Hyang knew that from the start, and proceeded to shake the individuals of the formation a bit by bit. And these little changes that Cho Ryu Hyang caused to the formation was clearly damaging the formation as a whole.

‘Like this, the formation would soon break.’

Gongson Chun Gi looked at the Administrator with some interest. There was still a way to escape this, even at this point of

time. But could that boy be able to notice that?

While he had been wondering that in his head, the Administrator began to send out some commands to his subordinates.

‘Hoh?’

As expected of the Administrator. That fellow really couldn’t be underestimated. Gongson Chun Gi leaned forward, with a face full of excitement.

How this event was caused in the first place no longer mattered. Just where would he be able to see something as entertaining as this?

The feeling of worry he felt for his disciple disappeared in an instant, and that feeling was replaced by curiosity and excitement. He really did stumble on something good today.

‘So, how will you get across this, Cho Ryu Hyang?’

The shape of the formation changed abruptly, and Cho Ryu Hyang was suddenly facing a great danger. Could that boy, his disciple, overcome this danger? This new formation wasn’t something one could break just by knowing the path.

While Gongson Chun Gi looked intently at the boy, Cho Ryu Hyang stopped moving and started to breathe deeply.

‘Hoh?’

Gongson Chun Gi’s eyebrows twitched. Just a moment ago, he felt the air itself tremble along with Cho Ryu Hyang’s breath.

And.....

‘That boy, did he notice me watching him?’

It happened in only an instant, but Gongson Chun Gi clearly felt Cho Ryu Hyang looking at him. Just what was that boy? Did he already possess some kind of strange skill inside his body at such an age?

To think a skill that could fool even the eyes of Gongson Chun Gi could exist..... Gongson Chun Gi couldn’t even begin to fathom how deep and profound that skill could be.

‘Anyways, it’s starting.’

That skill that just managed to move the surrounding air for a moment. He didn’t know what it was, but that skill would soon be activated.

‘Un Hui, this is unfortunate, but this is your loss.’

It seemed some kind of a bet was held between the two or

something, but he didn't know about its details. Anyways, to Gongson Chun Gi, it seemed that Cho Ryu Hyang had won this battle.

And that was exactly what happened. Cho Ryu Hyang instantly managed to suppress Un Hui's subordinates, and escaped the formation.

When Gongson Chun Gi saw this and nodded, he made eye contact with Cho Ryu Hyang once more.

‘Please pretend you haven't seen me.....’

At the time Gongson Chun Gi was trying to say this with his eyes.

The Administrator stared at Cho Ryu Hyang for a while, then fell down on his knees.

When Gongson Chun Gi made a confused expression, Un Hui bowed his head down and spoke.

“.....The Administrator of the Grass Shoe Garden, Un Hui, will dedicate the remainder of his life serving the Heir of the Heavenly Demon Church.”

“.....!”

Gongson Chun Gi's jaw dropped. The Un Hui he knew was a

really prideful fellow who wouldn't dare bow down before someone else.

Wasn't that guy the one who had enough courage to try have a go at the Pope himself? Gongosn Chun Gi kept the guy around because of that, but just what was happening here?

‘Just what happened between you two?’

Gongson Chun Gi's eyes began to be filled with complicated feelings.



Chapter 55. First Subordinate

It was the first time that Cho Ryu Hyang used Illusion Magic on a living person. Because of that, he had felt a little anxious using it. He was lucky that everything went so well.

“.....The Administrator of the Grass Shoe Garden, Un Hui, will dedicate the remainder of his life serving the Heir of the Heavenly Demon Church.”

When Un Hui knelt in front of him, Cho Ryu Hyang's eyes met with Gongson Chun Gi's. Cho Ryu Hyang could see that his teacher was plagued by complex feelings.

‘Was it that shocking?’

His teacher was usually a very carefree person. Cho Ryu Hyang never imagined that he'd see a face like that from his teacher. Cho Ryu Hyang scratched his cheeks.

Ten years was not as short as one might think. Those long years probably let the Administrator and the Pope develop a friendly relationship. But Cho Ryu Hyang didn't expect that their relationship could be so deep.

Cho Ryu Hyang looked at Un Hui and spoke.

“Stand up. There are too many people watching us.”

“.....”

Un Hui bit his lips while on the ground. He was careless. He was too careless and prideful.

‘Skill is not limited to age.’

That’s right. The words of the Pope were too right. Un Hui misjudged the child’s skills just based on appearance.

He thought that the child was being too arrogant, and tried to teach the boy a lesson. Just thinking about that made his face go hot.

He was acting foolishly without even trying to figure out the boy’s capabilities.

Un Hui was feeling very, very embarrassed at the moment. He began to slowly raise his body as he thought of something.

‘It’s good that I’m wearing a mask.’

He wore this mask so that he wouldn’t be underestimated by others because of his young age. He was quite thankful for wearing that mask at the moment.

“I think you can come out now, teacher.”

When Cho Ryu Hyang said this while looking at something, Un Hui flinched.

‘Teacher? Could it be?’

Un Hui’s gaze drifted over to the direction of Cho Ryu Hyang’s eyes. He could see something blurry there. It was quite hard to see, but once he began to concentrate on it, he could begin to see something.

‘The Pope.....’

Un Hui’s eyes shook a little bit. Since when was he there? Did he watch everything that happened? The Pope’s face clearly indicated that Un Hui’s fears were indeed true.

Un Hui tightened his fist until blood began to seep out. He showed something he never wanted to show anyone to one of the most important people in his life.

When Un Hui looked at Gongson Chun Gi with eyes filled with despair, Gongson Chun Gi, who had been sitting on top of a tree branch, appeared in front of Un Hui.

“I won’t ask you about what happened. After all, this is a matter to be settled between you two. But I must ask you this.”

“.....”

Un Hui became anxious.

The Pope wasn't just a normal Pope to him.

The Pope always came by to visit and answered his numerous questions, and never failed to provide a solution for even the strangest problems.

To Un Hui, this person was already a teacher to him. That kind of a person was currently looking at him with a complicated face.

“Is this truly what you wanted?”

“.....”

“Is this why you learned martial arts?”

“.....!”

Un Hui couldn't say anything. This incident was a lot different from the bet he had with the Pope a long time ago. This time, he had bet his life too easily.

And he lost.

“I'm not saying that the choice you made was wrong or

anything.”

Gongson Chun Gi came up to Un Hui with a serious face, and put his hand on Un Hui’s shoulder.

“This boy is someone you chose. The boy is a talented child. But you haven’t seen this boy’s true capabilities just yet.”

Un Hui bit his lips. The Pope was right. The boy called Cho Ryu Hyang. He didn’t decide to serve the boy because he felt something.

It was just because of a simple loss. He gave away his freedom just because of a bet.

“If you are serving this boy just because of some random circumstance, and not because you felt that this boy was someone worth serving, then you should stop whatever you’re doing now. I don’t know what bet you two had, but I don’t want to see you two destroy yourselves because of a silly bet.”

Un Hui trembled. He could feel how much the Pope cared for him. Because of that, a part of his heart warmed up a little.

‘I’m good with this.’

Un Hui felt satisfied. If he desired any more than this, he’d be too greedy. Right then, Gongson Chun Gi looked at Cho Ryu Hyang and opened his mouth.

“What do you think? I think that the current situation could be undone as long as you desire it.”

Cho Ryu Hyang looked at his teacher. He took off his glasses, and spoke.

“I do not want to let go of this person.”

Gongson Chun Gi widened his eyes as he looked at his disciple. The boy was being a little informal, but from that, he could detect persistence.

The boy was being unusually persistent. Right then, Gongson Chun Gi’s eyes reflected a strange light.

‘Oho?’

It looked like the boy was thinking about something. Gongson Chun Gi hid those thoughts of his as he tried to act ignorant.

“Things are going to be hard, as you haven’t accepted each other yet. Is that fine with you?”

Cho Ryu Hyang put his glasses back on, and spoke.

“Didn’t teacher tell me that I needed to find a subordinate of my own soon?”

“Right.”

“The Administrator will be my first subordinate.”

Gognson Chun Gi nodded, and opened his mouth.

“This guy here hasn’t seen your true potential yet. He hasn’t accepted you. is that fine?”

Cho Ryu Hyang nodded. Right. The Administrator still doubted him. But that didn’t matter.

“He’ll accept me in the future. I’ll make him.”

It was an amazing amount of confidence. Gongson Chun Gi had to change his view of his disciple a bit. He thought that his disciple didn’t even know about his own talent, but it seemed that wasn’t the case.

The boy already knew about his talent. That alone made Gongson Chun Gi happy. Gongson Chun Gi was unable to suppress the happiness welling up inside him.

“Kuhahaha! As expected of my disciple. You know my worries don’t amount to much. Good, good.”

“Thank you.”

Cho Ryu Hyang faintly smiled when he looked at his laughing teacher. It seemed that his teacher realized his intentions some time ago.

‘He truly is amazing.’

The feeling he had when he became that man’s disciple. That feeling that he was going to respect the person in front of him very much was beginning to come to life.

“Hui.”

“.....Yes, your holiness.”

Gongson Chun Gi grabbed Un Hui’s shoulder, and made a playful face.

“Honestly speaking, I feel sorry for a lot of things. I need to pay you back someday. But now, I feel as if I’ve already paid you back for what I owed you.”

“.....”

He felt sorry? Those words were too much for Un Hui. He already got so much from the Pope, but the Pope still said such things to him.

‘How should I respond?’

While Un Hui had been thinking that, Gongson Chun Gi resumed talking.

“You will continue living while observing this child. And you’ll come to realize that this child truly deserves to be my disciple. You’ll even become thankful to me for bringing the child here.”

Un Hui smiled when he heard the Pope’s words. He then slowly put his hand towards his face, then took off his mask.

Slip–

He was almost thirty, but a face of a twenty year old man was hidden behind the mask.

“I trust your decision.”

Gongson Chun Gi grinned.

“The only thing you have left is to confirm everything by yourself.”

Un Hui looked at Cho Ryu Hyang. Cho Ryu Hyang didn’t avoid that gaze. Then, Cho Ryu Hyang realized.

‘If the Administrator was inside the formation, I wonder how this would’ve turned out?’

No matter how much he thought, he couldn’t come up with a solid conclusion. Cho Ryu Hyang fondled his glasses, and bitterly smiled.

‘This really was a big gamble for me.’

But that gamble really paid off. Cho Ryu Hyang would’ve done anything to get Un Hui, no matter how big the gamble was.

While Cho Ryu Hyang was thinking that, Un Hui knelt down again.

“You’re going to damage your knees if you keep doing that.”

Gongson Chun Gi said this with a playful grin, but Un Hui didn’t smile back. He bowed down with a serious expression. When his face was nearly touching the ground, he spoke.

“Administrator Un Hui promises to serve the Heir of the church for the rest of his life.”

Cho Ryu Hyang thought a bit when he heard this. What should he say?

He tried to get some advice from Gonson Chun Gi by glancing at

him a few times, but Gongson Chun Gi's eyes just showed "it's not my problem, do this on your own".

'What should I say.'

Un Hui really was a desirable person. Wasn't that why Cho Ryu Hyang made the whole situation to be like this in the first place?

Plus, Un Hui was going to be his first subordinate. He wanted to say something memorable to the man.

'It isn't easy, eh?'

Gongson Chun Gi was just grinning while he looked at his disciple. Getting on a high position just meant that there were more responsibilities.

One couldn't make any mistakes, and every one of his/her action would hold significance.

'What will you say to him?'

Gongson Chun Gi made an expectant face. Right then, Cho Ryu Hyang smiled a little. He thought of something fitting for the situation. Cho Ryu Hyang knelt down, put his hands on Un Hui's shoulders, and spoke.

"In the future, I will treat you like Fan Kuai (樊噲: The right hand

of Emperor Gaozu of Han. Whenever Emperor Gaozu got cornered, Fan Kuai would save the emperor's life).

Fan Kuai? Un Hui felt emotional when he heard the child's words.

"I will protect you with my life."

"Thank you."

Cho Ryu Hyang smiled. That was how his very first subordinate was chosen.



Chapter 56. The Senior's Unique (?) Preference

Ju Da Hye headed for her senior's room with a handful of sweets.

As their teacher had instructed, the two had stayed behind in Sichuan in order to pull the Alliance to their side.

“What are you doing, senior?”

Ju Da Hye made a confused face after sticking her face into her senior's room.

Normally, her senior would be staring at his face in a mirror, but this time, he was thinking about something on his bed with a serious face.

Ju Da Hye was extremely surprised. Why was her senior, the crystallisation of narcissism, not doing anything?

‘To think senior was following teacher's orders to this degree.....’

Ju Da Hye thought that her senior was giving it his all in order to ally themselves with the Alliance. She put the sweets in her hand down on the table, and spoke with a touched face.

“I didn't know you'd be this engaged in the mission teacher gave

us. Here, have some of these sweets as you work.”

Chi Xie Ming looked at Ju Da Hye with a confused expression.

“What are you talking about?”

“It’s honestly my first time seeing you focus on something that much other than the time you take to look at yourself. I was surprised.”

“Really?”

Chi Xie Ming smiled a bit as he bit into one of the sweets Ju Da Hye brought.

“You know, I’m kind of surprised, too. I never expected that I’d be thinking about a man of all things all day.”

“What?”

“Gu Hui, was it? That big bear-like guy from the Nanman Beast Gate.”

“Yes.....”

“That guy’s face just won’t leave my mind after meeting him. It’s driving me crazy, dammit.”

Chi Xie Ming scratched his head in annoyance. While he was doing that, Ju Da Hye stepped backwards with a shocked face.

“C, could it be..... senior, you swung that way?”

Come to think of it, senior was always kind of suspicious. After all, there were many beautiful women in the North Sea Ice Palace, but the senior never even glanced at these women.

Because of senior's cold attitude towards women, there were countless rumors that suggested that he was homosexual, and tended to kidnap little boys to his room every night.

Ju Da Hye just smiled whenever she heard those rumors, but when she actually came in contact with the senior's hidden secrets, she shuddered a little.

‘But even so, to think he'd like muscular men of all things.’

For senior, a man who possessed skin that resembled those of a woman, it seemed that a person who resembled a young boy would suit him best.

Chi Xie Ming frowned when he saw his junior think about perverse thoughts regarding his sexuality. He began to stomp his way towards his junior.

“You’re beginning to think about something gross again, aren’t you.”

“Ah, auu! It hurts!”

Chi Xie Ming pulled at Ju Da Hye’s cheeks with one hand as he ate his sweets with the other, then sighed soon after.

“Damn, this is annoying.”



He was regretting the fact that he missed the chance to fight Gu Hui.

Chi Xie Ming was sure that he would've been able to give it his all when fighting an individual like Gu Hui. But since he had to suppress his urges when meeting Gu Hui, he was feeling really annoyed.

He wanted to break something. Just when he was about to let out the burning desire to fight inside his body, a suitable target he could fight had already disappeared.

“Argh! This is annoying, dammit!”

“Kyaaa! T, this hurts, you know!”

Bam–!

Chi Xie Ming glared at his junior, who pushed him away with force.

“Ara?”

When Chi Xie Ming looked upon his junior in order to exact upon her his wrath, he could see her clasping her left cheek while crying a little bit.

“Auuu.....”

Ju Da Hye's cheeks were swollen to an extreme degree. It almost looked like she was holding a piece of candy in her cheek.

When Chi Xie Ming's eyes widened in surprise, Ju Da Hye's eyes emanated a beastly aura as she stared at Chi Xie Ming with hostility.

“Uh?”

Normally, Chi Xie Ming would've immediately punished his junior for being so insolent, but since he was at fault for making her stare at him like that, he just stood in place, not knowing what to do.

“Se~nior!”

“Mm? What is it?”

Chi Xie Ming stepped backwards unconsciously as he answered. That was because the aura his junior was emitting was extremely fierce. If he tried to have a go at her when he couldn't even fight her properly, he would surely be punished badly.

“What are you going to do about this?”

Junior's swollen cheeks made her sound a little different from usual. It was quite entertaining, but laughing would surely bring

Chi Xie Ming calamity.

“Y, you’ll have to go find a doctor, of course.”

When Chi Xie Ming responded as such, Ju Da Hye pointed her finger towards the exit of the room.

“What are you trying to say here?”

“Go bring a doctor here right now.”

“M, me? Alone? Junior, isn’t it better to go together? Think carefully. Going together would result in you being treated faster.”

This time, Ju Da Hye pointed her finger at herself and spoke.

“Are you telling me to walk around outside with a face like this?”

Chi Xie Ming couldn’t retort to that, largely because he had to agree to it.

‘Well, it is true that going outside like that would be overdoing it.’

His junior really looked bad at the moment. Bad enough to have a negative effect on someone’s mental health.

And as always, Chi Xie Ming's bad habit of speaking his mind propped up, and he managed to say the words in his mind out loud.

“You really look like crap, huh.”

He instantly regretted saying that, but it was too late. When Chi Xie Ming flinched a little and glanced at Ju Da Hye, he could see Ju Da Hye pointing her finger out the door.

“Get. Out. Now!”

Chi Xie Ming ran outside without being able to say anything in retaliation.

“Who the hell would take her if she's so fierce like that?”

Chi Xie Ming began complaining when he came outside. Surely, what he did this time was a little over the line. But wasn't junior really overreacting to this? Maybe it was because he was taking it too easy on her.

Chi Xie Ming, who had been walking around trying to find a doctor, spotted a decent teahouse and decided to go in.

His current predicament with his junior was already long forgotten.

“What would you like, sir?”

“Give me a kettle of Longjing tea. A small one.”

“Yes sir.”

“Phew, the weather’s really good today.”

Chi Xie Ming looked up at the blue sky, and relaxed himself for a bit. But he soon looked somewhere else when he felt something strange touch his senses.

‘What’s this?’

Someone was coming here after parking a carriage.

“What would you like, ma’am?”

The employee of the teahouse asked this to the red-haired girl as the girl descended from the carriage. Neng Ha Young began to look for a suitable seat, then happened to cross her eyes with Chi Xie Ming’s.

‘A martial artist?’

Neng Ha Young began to think, trying to figure out who this

person in front of her was. Where was he from? Since she was still within the Alliance's territories, she was extremely alert.

She had no real worries since Shi Yup was with her, but she didn't want to cause a commotion.

‘Is he a loner?’

Since Chi Xie Ming was wearing a set of normal clothes, instead of the North Sea Ice Palace's martial uniform, Neng Ha Young was unable to identify Chi Xie Ming.

She could only see him as a handsome martial artist. One that was too handsome, at that.

“Ma’am?”

When the employee called out to Neng Ha Young, she took a seat where she would be able to observe Chi Xie Ming and spoke.

“Tieguanyin. A small one.”

“Yes, ma’am.”

When the employee took the order and disappeared, Neng Ha Young took a more comfortable position in her seat, and closed her eyes. Right now, the martial world was in absolute chaos.

There were small skirmishes everywhere, and many of the minor houses affiliated with the Alliance were getting pushed around everywhere.

Compared to that, the merchant companies and martial clans that allied themselves with the Heavenly Demon Church were going around doing whatever they wanted. The Black Moon Guild was fortunately able to gain several beneficial things by taking advantage of the situation.

‘Ten years.....’

The rule of the Heavenly Demon Church would likely last for about a decade. Just what should she do in order to gain benefits during that time period?

While Neng Ha Young was thinking that, Chi Xie Ming was staring at Neng Ha Young with a serious face.

‘What is this?’

The moment that girl appeared, something came into Chi Xie Ming’s sharpened senses. However, he couldn’t see anything.

This was a first. He didn’t like it.

‘Interesting.’

The girl didn't interest him in the slightest, but the person in her vicinity sure did. Chi Xie Ming licked his lips, and stood up.

He came up to the table Neng Ha Young was using, and sat down on the opposite side of Neng Ha Young.

“Excuse me.”

Neng Ha Young opened her eyes. She could then see the smiling man in front of her.

“Do you need anything?”

She wasn't particularly concerned with the man. She had Shi Yup by her side, and Neng Ha Young herself was able to take on most martial artists with ease.

Plus, she didn't even know what the other side wanted yet. Becoming cautious even before anything happened just wasn't her style.

“You kept arousing my interest, so I decided to come over like this.”

“.....”

Was he here just to try make out with her? If so, she had to be thankful for that. It mean that the man in front of her didn't know

her identity. Chi Xie Ming stared at Neng Ha Young with great care.

After looking at her for quite a bit, he sighed in awe and nodded.

“Yah~ I didn’t realize this a moment ago, but it seems you really have a bright future in front of you. I believe you’ll be a real looker in about three years.”

“.....What are you trying to say here?”

Neng Ha Young tilted her head in confusion, as if to say she wasn’t sure if she should be offended or not by Chi Xie Ming’s ambiguous words. Chi Xie Ming got straight to the point right then.

“So, who are you?”

“.....”

Neng Ha Young smiled when she heard Chi Xie Ming’s question.

“I’m here with my father to see the outside world while he takes care of something. Since father’s business is almost taken care of, I just decided to wait for him out here.”

“Hoh? Really?”

Right that moment, Neng Ha Young began to feel annoyance from the man's attitude. It was a sort of a feeling she got when her words weren't working on others.

“That's a pretty good cover story. Now, can you tell me who you really are?”

Neng Ha Young began to think. Just who was this man in front of her? Did he actually know her identity? But wasn't this meeting too much of a coincidence for that to happen?

“Aren't you the one who's supposed to reveal yourself first?”

Chi Xie Ming grinned. It was a happy grin that displayed his white teeth completely. Neng Ha Young, upon seeing that smile, felt a chill run up her spine.

‘This person.....’

Ther person in front of her was an expert. An expert whose strength she couldn't even begin to fathom. So why was an expert that strong doing something like this?

“It seems I've been quite rude to you. But since I'm in a troublesome position right now, it would be hard to reveal my identity.”

“.....Then it would be better if we pretended to have never seen each other.”

Neng Ha Young began to think as she felt cold sweat run down her back. The person in front of her was an expert. Probably one of the harmonious stage.

The energy the man revealed just now was enough to prove that.

The information she had about this man was pitifully small. Except the time where she purposefully leaked her position to the Alliance, she was unnoticed by everyone.

Even the Black Moon Guild itself didn't truly know her exact location. Because of this, Neng Ha Young was fairly certain that her meeting with this man was a coincidence.

It seemed Neng Ha Young had exceptionally bad luck. When she came up with the conclusion, Chi Xie Ming opened his mouth.

"I would prefer we not do that. I am a man who believes relationships are precious things, after all."

".....Must we really do this?"

When Neng Ha Young said this with a cold voice, Chi Xie Ming smiled warmly.

"I came here for it."

The surrounding air fluctuated violently. When Neng Ha Young's eyes widened in surprise, Chi Xie Ming's hand moved.

Chapter 57. Misdirected Fighting Spirit

Shi Yup had been wary of Chi Xie Ming from the time Neng Ha Young entered the teahouse.

‘This is troublesome.’

The strong fighting spirit emanating from Chi Xie Ming was making Shi Yup’s pupils tremble.

‘About 15 steps.’

It was annoying, but the enemy’s aura was far too big. The radius of the area, based on Shi Yup’s estimation, should be about fifteen steps. Stepping into that man’s aura would probably reveal his presence.

That was why he had been being extremely cautious all this time. But then, Chi Xie Ming’s aura suddenly expanded by an extremely large amount. As Shi Yup had never seen such a thing before in his life, he was a little slow when it came to adapting to the situation.

‘He noticed me.’

Chi Xie Ming was looking around carefully. Neng Ha Young might’ve not known, but Chi Xie Ming’s aura currently encompassed the whole teahouse.

Shi Yup erased his presense as much as he could for now, as he felt cold sweat roll down his back. He was using his teacher's signature stealth technique.

‘Hidden Qi Technique (氣遁法).’

When Shi Yup used this, no one would be able to notice his presence even if he stood right in front of someone. He would be completely invisible to the world.

But even a technique like this wasn't perfect. After all, there were always abnormalities like Chi Xie Ming existing in the world. When meeting a being like this, the user of this technique had to expertly control the distance from the person with wise decisions.

Thankfully, as Shi Yup managed to somehow pull away from Chi Xie Ming before things got out of hand, he managed to keep himself from being completely discovered.

The problem was Neng Ha Young. She was exposed. Because of that, Shi Yup had to quickly make a decision.

‘Ten steps.’

This was his current distance from Neng Ha Young. If he were to move away even further from her, he wouldn't be able to protect her from Chi Xie Ming.

While Shi Yup kept distressing over what to do, Chi Xie Ming

moved. Shi Yup had no choice but to move with the man.

‘Nine steps, eight steps.....’

The distance between Shi Yup and Chi Xie Ming kept shortening until Shi Yup was right next to Neng Ha Young. If Shi Yup wasn’t at least this close, he wouldn’t be able to fully protect her.

‘How long would I be able to last?’

A drop of cold sweat ran down Shi Yup’s forehead.

The more the distance between Shi Yup and Chi Xie Ming shortened, the more energy Shi Yup would have to expend in order to keep himself hidden. In the end, Shi Yup had to spend an enormous amount of energy to keep himself hidden.

And as Shi Yup was extremely close to Chi Xie Ming at the moment, making even the tiniest mistake would give him away.

‘This is dangerous.’

Countless warning bells were going off in Shi Yup’s head.

Even standing in front of an expert like this took energy. But then Shi Yup had to protect Neng Ha Young at the same time. This was why Shi Yup was focusing all his attention in controlling his breath and energy.

If the Hidden Qi Technique faltered here for even a millisecond, Shi Yup would be overcome with danger. He could start hearing Neng Ha Young talk with Chi Xie Ming. It seemed that they were just making small talk.

Shi Yup closed his eyes and began to focus. He had never pushed himself beyond his limits like this with the Hidden Qi Technique.

The sense of responsibility Shi Yup had for Neng Ha Young's safety was what enabled Shi Yup to overcome his limits like this.

Once he overcame the initial feeling of tiredness and discomfort, Shi Yup was overcome with a feeling of satisfaction. This was a new experience.

His heart, which had been beating slowly moments ago, began to beat with great speed, and his glands were opened up as his senses began to expand greatly. Surprisingly, Shi Yup's understanding of martial arts had suddenly improved at a crisis like this.

Right then, Chi Xie Ming's sharp killing intent touched his senses. When Shi Yup opened his eyes, he could see Chi Xie Ming smiling at Neng Ha Young.

'It's coming.'

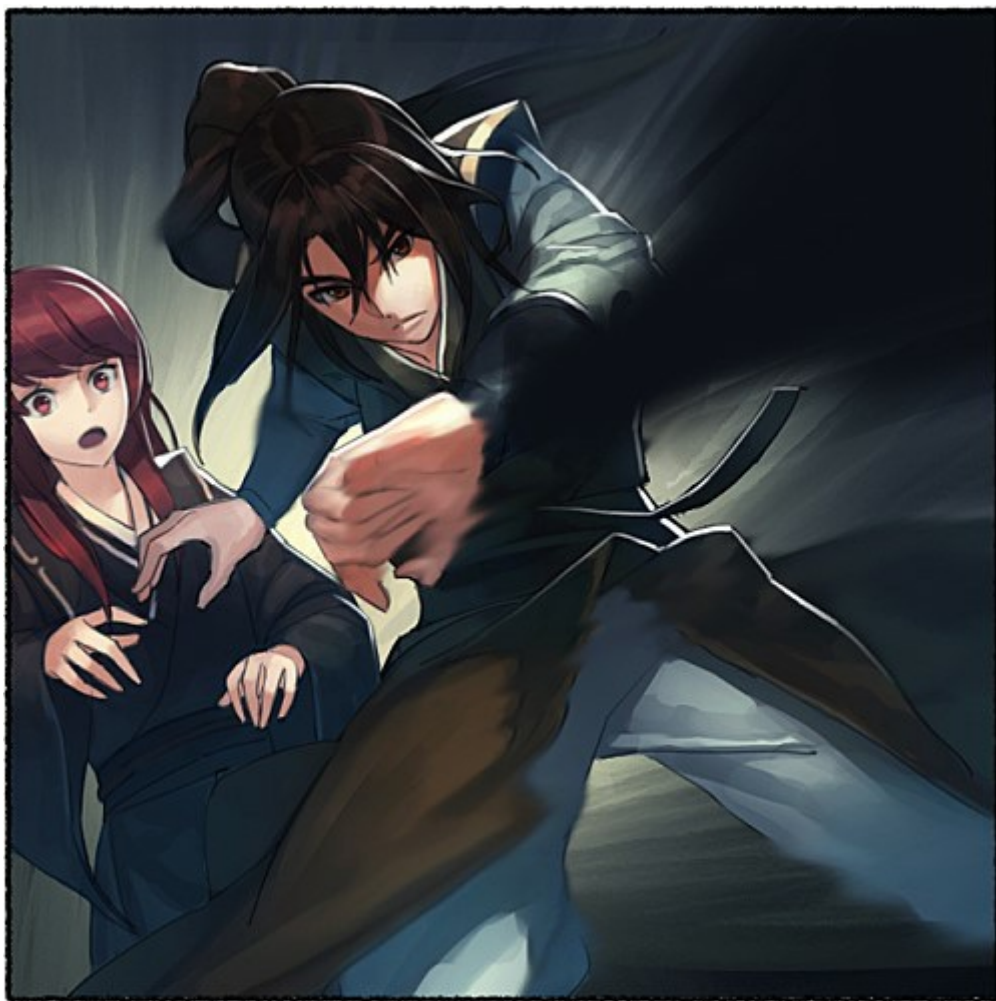
Shi Yup made his decision. At that moment, the air around him fluctuated as Chi Xie Ming's hand moved like the wind itself.

Paan—!

Chi Xie Ming shook his hands painfully as he frowned when an ear-piercing sound shook the surrounding area.

“What the hell? There really was someone here?”

“.....”



Neng ha Young took a look at Shi Yup’s arm. She didn’t know what was going on, but she knew that Shi Yup had just saved him. When she figured out what just happened, she became furious.

“How impolite.”

“You’re the one who’s impolite here.”

Chi Xie Ming clenched his fist and looked at Shi Yup. When he attacked Neng Ha Young, he could clearly see the background shatter next to the girl with Shi Yup emerging out.

Chi Xie Ming, who felt significant danger from this, put more strength into what was previously just a playful jab. But in the end, he was the one to get injured.

“That’s an interesting technique. What was it?”

Shi Yup didn’t say anything, and just stared at Chi Xie Ming. He soon confirmed something about the man.

’This person..... is hiding something.’

The things that he couldn’t see before clearly came into view. Even harmonious experts had rankings between them.

One could easily figure this out by seeing how even the fifteen guests were ranked into the three sovereigns, five emperors, and seven kings.

Shi Yup slowly put the hand he used to block Chi Xie Ming’s blow

down. He then clenched his fist. He had improved quite a bit by getting to a new degree of understanding, but he still couldn't clearly predict who'd win in a battle.

The only reason he managed to beat back the opponent that easily was because the man had underestimated him by a lot.

'I can't hope for such a thing to happen once more this time.'

When Shi Yup kept his mouth closed with an anxious face, Neng Ha Young spoke.

"Let's stop playing here. We're leaving."

"Where do you think you're going? We're just getting started."

Chi Xie Ming looked at Shi Yup and smiled. He didn't even look at Neng Ha Young anymore. The man in front of him. That man clearly wasn't normal.

That man had strength that was completely different from Gu Hui's. He was young, to boot. Young enough to be his age. This person was surely someone who was biding his time for the next generation to come.

'I can't let him go.'

The reason why Chi Xie Ming couldn't let Shi Yup leave

ultimately lay in the fact that Shi Yup used a sword.

“It wouldn’t be fun with just our hands, right? How about it? Let’s have a go with swords!”

He could tell with the previous exchange. The calluses that were on Shi Yup’s hand wasn’t just for show.

‘How strong would he get with a sword?’

Chi Xie Ming fondled his sword hilt. He had never considered losing to anyone other than his teacher.

“One? No. Three should be possible.”

Three blows. The battle would be done by then. A swordsman of that calibre would definitely come at him with full strength from the start.

‘I’m stronger than him.’

They were both harmonious experts, but Shi Yup was still slightly weaker than Chi Xie Ming. Chi Xie Ming predicted that, and his prediction was correct. But that difference in power was only as large as a sheet of paper.

‘But even that makes a difference.’

Shi Yup too thought the same thing Chi Xie Ming predicted, and made a dark expression. The more he looked at his opponent, the more their difference in power stood out to him.

“Since you’re not too weak, I’ll also go full out.”

Chi Xie Ming stood up and spoke.

“I don’t know why a person of your caliber is protecting this girl here. Well, I’m not that interested, though..... Anyways, if you try to run now, I’ll kill you. Both of you.”

Shi Yup couldn’t run away now. He calmed his breath and spoke.

“.....This isn’t a good place to fight.”

When Shi Yup said this, Chi Xie Ming took a look around. Shi Yup was right.

The people in the teahouse sensed that something dangerous would take place and left, but there were several martial artists nearby who were observing them.

The spectators just kept increasing with each passing moment.

“Indeed. There are too many people here.”

Neng Ha Young heard Chi Xie Ming's words and reached a conclusion.

‘This person isn't from the Alliance.’

Then where did this man come from? Was there really a place that could raise such a terrifying being?

“Shall we change places?”

Neng Ha Young bit her lips. She didn't like being moved around the way her opponent desired.

And when she looked at Shi Yup's eyes, she could see that he had no conviction in winning. The opponent was just that strong.

‘Not good.’

She had to earn time somehow. She had to have the worst scenario in her mind at all times. Chi Xie Ming looked at Neng Ha Young with an apologetic face.

“I'm not usually like this, but something really annoying happened to me today...”

-What's that got to do with us?!

Neng Ha Young barely stopped herself from shouting. This was the nature of the martial world.

No matter how much you were oppressed, you couldn't do anything if you were weak. That's why one had to be strong. That was what the martial world was.

‘Come to think of it, I did something kind of bad, didn't I.’

Chi Xie Ming scratched his chin with an awkward face. His fighting spirit that got roused from the time he met Gu Hui was released at the wrong person. The other side must feel like they got hit by a stray lightning bolt.

‘Well, whatever.’

They didn't even know about each other yet. But that didn't matter. As long as Chi Xie Ming was able to expel the fighting spirit writhing inside him, he would be satisfied.

‘I'm just a little frustrated, aren't I.’

Chi Xie Ming realized his current state of being, and smiled. It wasn't good to restrain himself too much. If he wanted to climb to the top, he had to do something like this every once in a while.

“You choose the location. I'll let you do at least that much.”

Shi Yup nodded. Then, he lifted Neng Ha Young into a princess carry without her consent.

“Ah!”

“Excuse me.”

Shwii—

The wind blew fiercely against their skin. The scenery around them passed by at a blur.

“Phew~ What a sight this is.”

Neng Ha Young couldn't even hear what Chi Xie Ming was saying at their back. She just wrapped her arms around Shi Yup's neck with a blush.

It felt like she would fall off if she let go. Her heart was beating wildly, and she felt embarrassed for some reason.

Stop dreaming, Neng Ha Young!’

No matter how many times she told herself that, it didn't work. Neng Ha Young was normally a very calm and cold individual, but this really was her first time experiencing something like this.

The thing that made her even more confused was the fact that this really didn't feel all that bad. So Neng Ha Young closed her eyes with her confused heart in Shi Yup's arms.

‘Here.’

Shi Yup found a suitable location, and stopped. Several martial artists followed them, but since they were so slow, they were left behind.

The place they were at was a mountain located some ways from the town, and it was a place that wouldn't attract too much attention.

“This is good.”

Chi Xie Ming, too, was satisfied. If they were here, no one would be able to find them.

Kakaka–

Chi Xie Ming drew a long line on the far left side of the field.

“Miss, you shouldn't step over that line. You might get swept up in the heat of the battle.”

When Neng Ha Young got released by Shi Yup, she momentarily lost her balance. She lost strength in her legs. Chi Xie Ming

grinned when he saw that.

“You liked it quite a bit, didn’t you?”

“.....Shut up.”

“A little fierce, aren’t you? Well, just wait over there. I might hit you if you step over the line, so be careful.”

Neng Ha Young glanced at Shi Yup. It was hard to look at him in the eye, for some reason. Shi Yup read her eyes, and nodded.

“You can wait.”

Neng Ha Young bit her lips and stepped over the line. There was nothing she could do here.

She was confident in her ability to use her brain, but in a pure confrontation between martial artists, she could do nothing. For the first time in her life, she felt useless.

“Shall we begin?”

Shi Yup nodded. He didn’t know much, but at least he knew that this man in front of him wasn’t interested in hurting Neng Ha Young. That was enough. As soon as Shi Yup realized that he didn’t have to protect Neng Ha Young, a burden was lifted off his mind.

He might be able to win at his current condition. The moment Shi Yup thought that, Chi Xie Ming's eyes widened. Shi Yup's body had vanished into thin air.

Chapter 58. The Power Of A Dragon's Pearl

Cho Ryu Hyang sat at the edge of the pagoda and stared into the artificial pond. It had been ten days since he came here.

The moment he arrived, he asked Um Seung Do to send a message to his house, but he still didn't get an answer.

Because of that, Cho Ryu Hyang was feeling quite stressed at the moment. It was partly due to the fact that he knew how his father would react to his current condition.

'It hurts.'

Cho Ryu Hyang took off his glasses and cleaned it with a bitter expression.

His father made both the Black Moon Guild and the Heavenly Demon Church look amazing, but Cho Ryu Hyang knew that in truth, his father didn't accept them at all.

To be honest, his father didn't even want to be near them.

Even Cho Ryu Hyang could see how much his father distanced himself from them whenever he had to take their request.

'And to think I'd become the Heir to the Heavenly Demon Church.....'

There would be nothing as surprising as this to his father. Cho Ryu Hyang bitterly smiled. Cho Ryu Hyang, unlike his father, didn't have a bad opinion of either the Black Moon Guild or the Heavenly Demon Church.

Perhaps he was like this thanks to his father's education that aimed to get rid of prejudice, or perhaps it was a tragedy caused by false education.

No matter what had happened, however, his current predicament couldn't be changed.

'I should talk to him soon.'

As this was a very big decision in his life, he had to get his parent's permission.

He believed that his parents would respect his decision, but at the same time felt that his parents would have a hard time accepting all this. When he thought about this, he bitterly smiled.

Cho Ryu Hyang shook his head in order to clear it of any useless thoughts, then sat down and began to fondle the Moon Edge Blade Technique manual in his arms.

'Ryun.....'

The Moon Edge Blade Technique was comprised of thirty different parts, and each part was provided with a method to train it.

Ryun, the beginning of the Moon Edge Blade Technique. Cho Ryu Hyang was stuck there. He didn't know what to do.

'Turn the whole body into a weapon.'

The words had a nice ring to it. A body that wouldn't break from anything in the world. The Moon Edge Blade Technique started by creating a body like that.

But just this much description of 'Ryun' wasn't able to give Cho Ryu Hyang even the slightest hint at how to start training.

'Make the body stronger by pulling up the power of the world inside the body. Once one does that, he/she will be able to attain a power that can shake the heavens.'

This was the explanation of the first part of the Moon Edge Blade Technique. The most important part in the sentence was 'the world'. Cho Ryu Hyang couldn't even figure out what the author meant by that word.

—Sometimes, there's a need to see everything in a simple light. You see, the truth is usually simpler than you might think.

The advice his teacher had given him floated randomly in his

mind. Look at it in a simply light? Just what was he supposed to look at, and how was he supposed to look at it? To Cho Ryu Hyang, his teacher's advice just made everything more confusing.

‘Just solving this should make everything else easier.....’

Everything was hard in the beginning. Cho Ryu Hyang felt that everything else would get simpler after mastering ‘Ryun’, but he simply didn’t have any idea as to how he should master it.

Cho Ryu Hyang kept thinking hard with a hand over his forehead. Right then, he could hear someone laughing in his mind.

[Child, you’re still obsessing over useless things.]

Cho Ryu Hyang’s eyes sparkled. He knew this arrogant voice in his head.

‘Elder!’

Zhuge Liang. That man suddenly talked. Just where was he all this time? Why didn’t he respond no matter how much Cho Ryu Hyang called for him?

What was he doing when Cho Ryu Hyang really needed help? When Cho Ryu Hyang suddenly thought of various things that made him feel disappointed, Zhuge Liang smiled bitterly.

[I was busy thanks to your stupid actions.]

Stupid actions? Busy? What was he talking about? Wasn't Zhuge Liang a being without flesh?

[Tian Nu, that dragon played a amusing trick on you before he ascended. Because of that, I became unexpectedly busy.]

Zhuge Liang's voice contained a hint of anger. What was he angry about?

And wasn't Tian Nu the imugi that ascended to heaven a while back? When Cho Ryu Hyang thought of this, Zhuge Liang flapped his fan while speaking in a low voice.

[To give an unprepared child a Black Dragon (墨龍) Pearl..... Taking care of it took quite a bit of time.]

The two gifts Cho Ryu Hyang received from the dragon. One was the Moon Blade Edge Technique, and the other was a purple sphere. That purple sphere. It was actually a Black Dragon's pearl.

[It's a little shattered, but a Dragon's pearl isn't something a human can take care of. You, greenhorn, foolishly touched it without even knowing that.]

Cho Ryu Hyang nodded. He almost died that time. After being penetrated by an immense amount of electricity, he had fainted. Thankfully, he survived, but the experience still scared him.

[It wouldn't have been weird if you had died then.]

No. Normally, he should've died. The power of a dragon's pearl was too much for a mere human to take in. Even Tian Nu knew that much.

The reason Tian Nu entrusted the pearl to Cho Ryu Hyang was because he trusted Zhuge Liang inside Cho Ryu Hyang's body. Tian Nu believed that with Zhuge Liang, Cho Ryu Hyang would be able to contain the power of the pearl without much problems.

'This child probably didn't even know that he could've died.'

Zhuge Liang's lips twitched as he fanned himself. When he thought of just how much he suffered to save this child, the anger repressed inside him rose up like a tidal wave.

Even if he was the Zhuge Liang, the man who prided himself in absolute perfection, he could only show his true power when he had a body. Right now, he was powerless.

Because of that, the event where Zhuge Liang helped Cho Ryu Hyang take in the pearl was really hard to digest. His consciousness almost got swept away by the immense power of the pearl.

'I almost died.'

Zhuge Liang looked up at the sky, and swore at Tian Nu, who was watching over them with a smile.

But even if Zhuge Liang's existence was almost erased because of Tian Nu's antics, he did gain several things from this.

[Greenhorn.]

‘Yes, elder.’

[Are you curious about the ‘world’ inside your body?]

When Zhuge Liang said this with a suggestive voice, Cho Ryu Hyang's eyes sparkled. As expected, this person must know much about the inner ‘world’ of the body.

‘Please teach me, elder.’

[Fine. I will help you a little.]

Zhuge Liang said this, and smiled mischievously whilst covering his mouth with his fan. The memories of trying to contain the power of the pearl with much difficulty passed in his mind briefly.

Cho Ryu Hyang was standing with eyes filled with expectation. Right then, everything around him turned dark.

‘Eh?’

At the same time, his legs lost strength, and the sound around him disappeared completely.

When he started to stumble and fall, Un Hui appeared and grabbed him before he fell on the floor.

“Young master?”

“.....”

Everything was out of focus. Un Hui’s face hardened as he shook Cho Ryu Hyang, but Cho Ryu Hyang failed to regain his senses.

Un Hui’s face began to harden even more. He quickly took Cho Ryu Hyang’s pulse, and found that Cho Ryu Hyang’s pulses were extremely faint.

‘Just what is.....’

Un Hui’s senses were all warning him of danger. Cho Ryu Hyang was in that much danger. Cho Ryu Hyang’s breathing became shallow, and his body was sprawled out like a corpse.

Not only that, Cho Ryu Hyang’s pink face lost its color as the whole body started to turn pale. Un Hui was assaulted with a feeling of agitation.

“Young master! Young master!”

No matter how much he called, Cho Ryu Hyang wouldn't wake. Un Hui regained his senses after noticing his master's face turning blue.

He began to move like lightning. He was carrying Cho Ryu Hyang to the medicinal house.



Bam—!

The medicinal house was one of the more important departments in the church. Because of this, the medicinal house was guarded heavily, and the guards stationed there all had considerable strength.

But of course, these people were only strong to normal people. Against a harmonious expert charging at them like a bull, even these guards wouldn't know what to do.

“Move!”

“Halt!”

After finding a martial artist of immense strength charging at the medicinal house, twenty guards gathered at the gates. Upon seeing this, Un Hui's eyes grew cold.

“Move, or die.”

“.....!”

Un Hui felt extremely hurried at the moment. That was because Cho Ryu Hyang's breathing kept on getting even shallower.

‘There's no time.’

Was it because of his anxiousness? Un Hui's body began to emit even more killing intent than usual. The intense killing intent emitted by Un Hui was so strong, that it was enough to make the peak experts guarding the medicinal house almost piss themselves in fear.

‘A harmonious expert!’

The experts at the medicinal house prepared themselves for battle. Even if the enemy was a harmonious expert, they could not run. They had to guard this place with their life.

That was their mission.

‘He's coming.’

Just when the experts' faces filled with dread, the gates of the medicinal house opened, and a voice came from the inside of the building.

“Don't block him. He's a person I know.”

“Sir!”

“Che, there's no need to make a fuss about all this. Why did you come here this early in the morning?”

Doctor Sunwu Jo Duk. Thankfully, this man was a person who

had met Un Hui several times in the past. Because he could recognise Un Hui's aura, he could come out in time.

Sunwu Jo Duk frowned when he saw Un Hui approaching him without any explanation or greeting. He could see how anxious Un Hui was.

“Calm down, boy. I can only help you after you tell me why you came here.”

Un Hui just stretched out his arms with something on it. There was a boy who resembled a corpse on his arms.

“It's the young master.”

Sunwu Jo Duk's relaxed smile faded when he heard Un Hui's words.

“What?”

“It's the young master.”

Sunwu Jo Duk, as if he finally understood what was going on, took Cho Ryu Hyang in his arms. He quickly touched Cho Ryu Hyang's vein, and his face hardened. Cho Ryu Hyang almost had no pulse.

“.....What the hell were you doing while the young master got

to this state?”

“.....”

Un Hui couldn't say anything. When Sunwu Jo Duk saw this, his body trembled in rage. He looked at Un Hui with a gaze that could kill, and said something in a low voice.

“If something happens to the young master, I'll kill you ten times over.”

Un Hui looked down with eyes filled with complex feelings. He, too, didn't know what happened.

But he couldn't say anything in retort. He was clearly right next to Cho Ryu Hyang, and yet couldn't do anything to save his master.

‘I'm useless.’

While Un Hui's eyes filled with self-loathe, Sunwu Jo Duk took out a giant needle. He was using his precious Life-death Golden Needle.

Sunwu Jo Duk quickly pierced Cho Ryu Hyang's right pinky with that needle.

Puu—!

When he pulled the needle back out, black blood streamed out of Cho Ryu Hyang's finger. Sunwu Jo Duk observed this as he wiped sweat from his brows.

“.....Someone go alert the Pope.”

“Ah, yes sir.”

Few of the experts at the gate disappeared, as Sunwu Jo Duk quickly carried Cho Ryu Hyang inside the medicinal building.

He then commanded his subordinates to bring several precious medicine as he lay Cho Ryu Hyang down on the bed.

‘I must save him.’

This was a precious heir to the church. They couldn't lose someone like this in a silly accident like this.

Sunwu Jo Duk grit his teeth, pulled up his sleeves, and lifted the Life-Death Golden Needle. He was prepared to use all the medical skill he gathered over the ages on Cho Ryu Hyang.

Chapter 59. A Deadly Battle

Normally, the North Sea (北海: Present-day Lake Baikal) was a place the martial world didn't pay that much attention to.

That was because the North Sea was a land with harsh living conditions that hosted only a small population.

But once the North Sea Ice Palace revealed itself, the view mainland people held against the North Sea changed drastically.

The result of the battle would be decided in an instant. That was what Shi Yup thought. And that factor of the battle would work against Shi Yup.

But he couldn't do anything about it. In front of an expert like this, petty tricks were useless.

‘I need to make a perfect opportunity.’

What should he do, then? Shi Yup moved as soon as he thought that. His body stretched out like a stick, and rapidly advanced toward Chi Xie Ming.

It was Shi Yup's sword. It was a flexible sword capable of waving. When putting inner energy inside the sword, the sword would turn hard and release a sharp energy.

‘He’s coming.’

Chi Xie Ming stepped back and lowered his posture. He didn’t want to admit it, but Shi Yup was slightly faster than he.

Trying to dodge by relying on his sight would be useless. He had to slice everything that enters his aura by relying on his instincts alone.

‘There’s nothing to fear if it’s just fast.’

Chi Xie Ming smiled. His opponent only had one advantage over him, and that was speed. There was no need to fear anything.

Pyut—

The sharp feeling that rose up from his side. Chi Xie Ming could feel dangerous energy on his neck. An extremely thick killing intent strong enough to make even him tremble.

‘Dodge it! Dodge it!’

He just had to dodge this one. Just this one strike. As long as he dodged this, it would be his win. The already low posture that Chi Xie Ming had lowered even further, to a degree where his upper body almost touched the floor.

Saa—

A cold feeling swept over him, and a part of his hair got cut off. At the same time, Chi Xie Ming grinned.

‘I win.’

Chi Xie Ming stood back up immediately, and gripped his sword. His muscles expanded as if they were about to explode. The sword slid out of the hilt explosively.

Chii–

The white light that cut the air. This was the beginning of Chi Xie Ming’s attack. Shi Yup’s eyes widened in surprise.

Pyut–

‘Iaido (拔劍術).’

The fastest sword drawing technique in the world. That was what made the North Sea Ice Palace so fearsome. Chi Xie Ming smiled.

‘This is the end.’

This blow will destroy his opponent. After all, his attack wasn’t something that couldn’t be blocked, or dodged. That was what Chi Xie Ming believed.

–When the distance between two people shorten enough, petty tricks would become useless.

The voice of Neng Mu Gi resounded in Shi Yup's head. At the same time, the sword in Shi Yup's hand rippled a bit.

The distance between them was very, very small. The closer the two were, the more important an individual's perception and experience get, compared to skill or talent. When it came to skill, it seemed that Chi Xie Ming was above Shi Yup. That was critical.

But if the two of them were close enough to hear each other breath, even skill became useless.

‘I was waiting for this.’

Shi Yup, too, was waiting for this to happen. He had one chance.

He expected Chi Xie Ming to strike at him from below. That strike was something that couldn't be blocked or dodged. Chi Xie Ming's strike wasn't something as petty as that.

Because of that, there wasn't much Shi Yup couldn't do. And in the first place, Shi Yup created such a situation with one thing in mind.

‘Let's die together.’

He couldn't dodge or block, but he could kill him in the process of dying. Killing Chi Xie Ming would be enough for him. Energy gathered into Shi Yup's sword, and the sword began to shoot out like a snake.

The sword was shooting towards Chi Xie Ming's heart. Shi Yup's eyes met with Chi Xie Ming's midair. The two could clearly see what they were thinking.

‘Shit.’

Chi Xie Ming ground his teeth. He thought that Shi Yup would be soft, just like his appearance, but the man turned out to be a mad dog. He knew just what his opponent was going for.

This was troubling. In the first place, Chi Xie Ming had no desire to die in the wilderness with a fellow man.

‘What do I do?’

He couldn't take back his sword. He wasn't confident that he would be able to block the oncoming strikes from Shi Yup that would come afterwards.

But it wasn't like he could afford to die together with Shi Yup. He was at a tricky situation.

‘Let’s do this, you bastard.’

He started this fight light-heartedly. After all, to him, the fight was just something to lift up his mood. Never did he realize that this battle would soon turn into one where he would have to risk his life.

Chi Xie Ming quickly changed the direction of his strike. He was trying to block Shi Yup’s attack.

But Shi Yup proved to be stronger than Chi Xie Ming initially thought. Shi Yup’s sword swerved around Chi Xie Ming’s sword, and kept going for Chi Xie Ming’s heart. That was when it began.

Chi Xie Ming kept blocking, and Shi Yup kept attacking. The fight that was supposed to be finished within a single attack was being dragged out quite a bit. In an instant, hundreds of sword strikes were exchanged between the two.

But none of the strikes ever met its mark. Once a sword hit something, the winner of the battle would be decided. That was what Chi Xie Ming was going for.

But Shi Yup wasn’t about to let it happen.

‘I lose if I let my concentration slip even a little.’

That was what the two were thinking.

If they made even the tiniest mistake, their concentration would slip, and the enemy's sword would impale them. Chi Xie Ming grit his teeth as he focused even more on defending.

‘Bastard.’

Each one of Shi Yup's strike was a risky one. Shi Yup was focusing entirely on attacking, without giving attention to defense at all. That was why Chi Xie Ming was unable to attack; He could see holes in Shi Yup's defenses, but there simply was no time to exploit them.

When one lost ground in a battle like this, he had to match the flow of the battle according to his opponent. Getting tired, or losing concentration would be instant death. Chi Xie Ming's relaxed face eventually turned to a ferocious one.

‘Dangerous.’

Neng Ha Young bit her lip. It looked like Shi Yup was winning. After all, he was the one on the offensive.

But that was dangerous. If Shi Yup faltered even a bit in one of his attacks, his body would be stabbed multiple times in an instant.

‘Where is he from?’

The question suddenly floated into Neng Ha Young's mind. There was no way she wouldn't have heard the name of an expert like that. When she thought that much, however, she immediately shook her head.

‘No. There is a case where an expert like that has no name in the martial world.’

Wasn't her guard, Shi Yup, like that? Even when he was a harmonious expert, the world didn't know about him. It must be the same for that man, too.

After all, no matter how much she scrolled through the various information in her head, she couldn't think of anyone. Well, it wasn't like that man's identity wasn't something important at this point in time, anyway.

‘I need to find out a way to deal with this.’

Shi Yup's situation would worsen the more time passes. Neng Ha Young knew this since even she could see that Shi Yup was straining himself.

Him being on the offensive would not last long. That was Neng Ha Young's conclusion, and it wasn't a wrong one.

‘If I can shake him just a bit.....’

Neng Ha Young thought a bit, and after a while she smiled

faintly. She figured out a solution.

‘It’s a little cheap, but.....’

Barging into a holy battle between two men of the martial world was indeed very cheap.

But Neng Ha Young didn’t care about that.

To her, saving Shi Yup was the only thing that mattered, and results were the only thing that ever mattered to her. That was why she had to do this.

‘But.....’

For some reason, she didn’t want to do it. She found a way to save Shi Yup, but seeing him fight made her feel that interfering would be equivalent of sinning.

Why? To her, a person who only cared about results, concerns like these shouldn’t have appeared in the first place.

Right then.

Chii–

A line of blood formed in the air as Shi Yup’s elbow got sliced by

Chi Xie Ming's sword. When Neng Ha Young saw this, she became outraged. She no longer had time to be concerned over anything.

‘It doesn’t matter even if he starts hating me from now on.’

Neng Ha Young looked at Chi Xie Ming. With a determined look, she opened her mouth.

[Are you from the North Sea Ice Palace?]

She sent a message to Chi Xie Ming. At the same time, the attack that Chi Xie Ming was performing instantly lost its power. Chi Xie Ming's concentration had been broken.

Because of Neng Ha Young.

“This bitch.....”

Puaa—!

Blood sprayed out like a fountain. It was a fatal wound. Neng Ha Young quickly moved she she saw the blood spray from Chi Xie Ming.

Shi Yup, who attacked Chi Xie Ming the same time Chi Xie Ming had attacked him, wasn't that well-off either. Chi Xie Ming used a significant amount of strength to attack Shi Yup. Because of this, Shi Yup's torso was endlessly puking out blood.

“Cough!”

Neng Ha Young ran like the wind to assist Shi Yup, and quickly applied medicine to his wounds.

“Let’s stop here.”

“.....What?”

Chi Xie Ming was extremely angry. He began to speak while gritting his teeth.

“Is this how the mainland works? Or is this just your idea?”

Neng Ha Young didn’t answer. That was because she could feel that even Shi Yup was looking at her with complicated feelings.

‘I can’t help it even if he hates me.’

In the first place, Shi Yup shouldn’t have tried to risk his life while fighting. There was a limit to how much one could show off in front of her.

Neng Ha Young thought that as she stared right at Chi Xie Ming.

“It’s ok even if you swear at me. You won this time. But that’s it.”

“.....”

Chi Xie Ming used his sword as a temporary staff to let himself stand, and steadied his breath. His head was spinning quite a bit, which made it a little hard for him to perceive his surroundings.

His rage was going out of control. That girl intervened at the most critical moment.

‘Shit.’

His wound was deeper than he thought. He had to treat himself quickly, but the situation wasn’t looking too good. The girl spoke up when he made a dark face.

“I’m Neng Ha Young, from the Black Moon Guild.”

“.....!”

“What’s your name?”

Chi Xie Ming ground his teeth. Unfortunately, the Black Moon Guild wasn’t something he could afford to offend at the moment. Making a new enemy when the North Sea Ice Palace had to fight the Demon Church wouldn’t be a wise decision to make

“Tell me your name. I will repay you in the future.”

Chi Xie Ming closed his eyes. He was feeling a little concerned. He sighed, and opened his mouth.

“.....What’s your name?”

“I’m Neng Ha.....”

“I wasn’t asking for your damned name. Go the hell away.”

“.....!”

Neng Ha Young bit her lips. She was never treated this way in the past. At that moment, Shi Yup opened his eyes and looked at Chi Xie Ming. He opened his mouth.

“Shi Yup.”

“Shi Yup.....”

Chi Xie Ming smiled. He then wiped the blood on his mouth with his sleeves, then pulled out the sword from the ground.

“My name is Chi Xie Ming, the heir of the North Sea Ice Palace. I will come to the Black Moon Guild in the future to collect my debt.”

Shi Yup nodded.

“I will be waiting.”

Chi Xie Ming grinned. Unlike the girl, he actually held Shi Yup in a good light. Shi Yup began to think as he watched Chi Xie Ming walk away.

‘I lost.’

He lost completely. If Neng Ha Young didn’t intervene, he would’ve been a corpse by now.

‘I don’t want to fight him again.’

That was his honest feelings. He couldn’t hope for something like what saved his life to happen again. His opponent was strong, and if the battle continued for even a bit, he would have definitely died.

Shi Yup tried to stand, but fell back down.

“Are you okay?”

Shi Yup nodded when he heard Neng Ha Young’s question. The two of them didn’t know at the time.

They didn't know that they had actually survived a battle against the future Sword King (剣王)..... They would only find out about this in the future.



Chapter 60. Cho Ryu Hyang's Hibernation(?)

Breathing is something that can be done without even thinking. That is also the case when moving your limbs.

It's something that can be done without any concentration. But when you think about it a little you start wondering why such a thing is possible.

Walking, talking, breathing. Everything that can be done naturally. Could it be that these things were powered by some kind of 'strength' within the body?

When one assumed that that was truly the case, what would happen if that 'strength' completely disappeared? An example of that state would be Cho Ryu Hyang at that moment.

'It's dark.'

Darkness was everywhere. That darkness wasn't caused by something like an absence of light, however.

'My vision is gone.'

Of course, Cho Ryu Hyang only realized this after quite some time. He tried to stretch out his hand, but couldn't. He couldn't even feel his limbs.

No, to be more specific, it felt like his whole body was gone. It was as if his physical body just vanished from the world.

‘Just what is.....’

What happened? Instead of being frightened, Cho Ryu Hyang waited patiently. As expected, after a while, someone talked to Cho Ryu Hyang’s ‘consciousness’.

[How is it, greenhorn? Do you think you can take it?]

An arrogant, mocking voice. The owner of this voice was Zhuge Liang. Cho Ryu Hyang responded.

‘It’s a little uncomfortable, but other than that, I can take it.’

Indeed. He wasn’t feeling too bad at the moment.

[You can take it?]

‘Yes.’

This came as an unexpected answer to Zhuge Liang. Don’t most people get extremely confused when faced with situations like these?

But since this child went through quite a lot of abnormal events recently, the child became a little unresponsive to such events. Zhuge Liang lightly caressed his fan as he spoke.

[You will be able to understand what you desire if you manage to break yourself out of this state alone.]

The thing Cho Ryu Hyang wanted to understand. That would be the world within Cho Ryu Hyang's body. Cho Ryu Hyang's eyes lit up automatically. He felt that he was nearing the answer to his problem.

‘So that’s related to the current state of the body?’

When Cho Ryu Hyang asked this, Zhuge Liang nodded. To Zhuge Liang, Cho Ryu Hyang's greatest power lay in his power to concentrate.

‘But that can also serve to be a critical weakness.’

Zhuge Liang fingered the tip of his fan. Cho Ryu Hyang was a type of a boy who wouldn't rest until he found out every single detail about one thing.

That kind of a personality would be good for accomplishing something quickly, but when you see it from another point of view, it could mean that one could miss several details on what is happening around them.

That was exactly what was happening here. The boy was missing the most important information here by just thinking about the ‘world’ inside the body. Zhuge Liang decided to tell the boy about that critical information.

[If I were to speak in simpler terms, your body was forcefully separated from your mind. This is a very dangerous thing to do.]

Dangerous? Why? Cho Ryu Hyang made a confused expression for a second. He then thought of something, and became extremely surprised.

‘W, wouldn’t that be extremely troublesome?’

[Of course.]

‘Am I even breathing properly right now?’

Just how was he breathing if his body was separated from the mind? Zhuge Liang faintly smiled when he heard Cho Ryu Hyang’s question.

[If I removed your mind from your body completely, you’d be dead by now.]

That meant that Cho Ryu Hyang wasn’t completely separated from his body at the moment. While Cho Ryu Hyang sighed in relief at the fact, Zhuge Liang spoke.

[But this state won't last for long. If you do not go back to your original state, your breathing will stop. That will be the end.]

When Zhuge Liang said this casually, Cho Ryu Hyang frowned. Was Zhuge Liang really this irresponsible?

Zhuge Liang, not caring a single bit about what Cho Ryu Hyang thought of him, covered his mouth with his fan as he spoke.

[You have about 15 minutes from now. If your body gets used to being without your mind after this time, it would be the end.]

‘How would it end?’

When Cho Ryu Hyang asked this, Zhuge Liang didn't respond. After staying silent for a bit, he looked towards the place where Cho Ryu Hyang's consciousness lay and spoke.

[You will be stuck in the cage known as the body. Forever.]

‘.....’

Cho Ryu Hyang's current situation was a lot worse than he originally thought.

‘This is driving me crazy.’

Sunwu Jo Duk tilted his head as he wiped the sweat on his forehead.

He didn’t know much about martial arts and the likes, but when it came to medicine, Sunwu Jo Duk could boast that his talent rivalled that of the Pope.

In other words, he was confident that there was no one else in the world better than he when it came to medicine. He was right about it, too. But right now, that doctor was trying to cure Cho Ryu Hyang with intense concentration.

‘His pulse is normal, no matter how I look at it.’

Cho Ryu Hyang’s pulse was weak, but it was normal. His breathing was shallow, but like his pulse, it contained no abnormalities. There wasn’t anything that gave away a sign of a sickness.

‘He isn’t poisoned, either.....’

He assumed that Cho Ryu Hyang was poisoned at first, but the boy wasn’t.

Plus, Cho Ryu Hyang was someone he personally checked himself, so he knew the most about the boy than anyone else in the world.

Sunwu Jo Duk felt like he was about to go insane. It felt like his lifespan was getting shorter the longer he examined Cho Ryu Hyang.

‘He has no abnormalities? How can this even be possible?’

Sunwu Jo Duk’s mouth went dry. The heir, Cho Ryu Hyang, would look sick even to an idiot. Moreover, the heir seemed to be in an extremely critical condition.

But Sunwu Jo Duk was unable to find the cause of the heir’s current state. This was driving him absolutely insane. Right then, someone opened the door and came in.

“The boy’s hurt?”

“Your Holiness.”

Gongson Chun Gi casually greeted Sunwu Jo Duk, and immediately began to investigate Cho Ryu Hyang’s current state. He began to ask a few questions.

“So, how long do you think it would take for him to wake up?”

“.....I don’t know.”

“Mm? What do you mean by that?”

“I didn’t manage to find the cause of the heir’s current condition.”

When Sunwu Jo Duk said this with a pained face, Gongson Chun Gi’s eyes began to turn a little more serious.

“You examined him, and didn’t find the cause? You?”

“.....Yes.”

“You’re losing your touch.”

“.....”

“Move.”

Normally, Sunwu Jo Duk would never let someone else examine his patient, but this was an exception.

When Sunwu Jo Duk moved away, Gongson Chun Gi stretched out his hand and grabbed Cho Ryu Hyang’s artery. He soon began frowning.

“What the heck? What’s wrong with him?”

The boy’s breathing was extremely shallow. His heartbeat was

equally faint.

If that were the case, then there definitely had to be a problem within the body somewhere. But the boy didn't have any problems. This was almost like.....

“It's like he's hibernating, isn't it?”

When Gongson Chun Gi blurted this out, Sunwu Jo Duk nodded. He had been thinking the same thing.

“But as you know, humans don't hibernate.”

“Right.”

Then what was this? When Gongson Chun Gi began to think, Sunwu Jo Duk sighed deeply.

“I really might have to retire at this rate. It seems my old hands are losing its touch.”

When Sunwu Jo Duk looked down on his hands and said this in a depressed voice, Gongson Chun Gi smirked.

“If you lost your touch, doesn't that mean I lost mine, too? Don't get depressed over nothing, and go over there for a bit.”

“What are you trying to do?”

“I’m actually beginning to think that this kid might actually be hibernating.”

“What?”

Are you serious? Sunwu Jo Duk barely suppressed himself from saying that. Seeing how Gongson Chun Gi was joking in a situation like this, he felt that the man really was on a different class than others.

While Sunwu Jo Duk looked at Gongson Chun Gi with complex emotions, Gongson Chun Gi sat down comfortably, and put his hand on Cho Ryu Hyang’s head.

“If medicinal techniques don’t work, you gotta resort to magic. I’m pretty confident about magic, you know. So just stay over there for a second.”

Sunwu Jo Duk wanted to say something, but gave up on it. As a person who couldn’t even figure out the cause of the heir’s current condition, he felt that he had no right to say anything.

‘But there is no way for a human to be hibernating, is there?’

Should he try to stop the Pope here? Gongson Chun Gi grinned while staring at the conflicted medicine man, then began to focus on Cho Ryu Hyang. He then tilted his head in wonder.

‘His consciousness is locked away deep inside.’

If one was simply sleeping, the defenses of the mind wouldn’t be this strong. It was almost as if Cho Ryu Hyang was trying to prevent anyone from getting to him. When Gongson Chun Gi thought this, he smiled.

‘Do you really want to hibernate or something, disciple?’



Gongson Chun Gi began to think a bit here. It wasn't that hard for him to forcefully wake Cho Ryu Hyang here.

But he didn't really want to resort to that. After all, he didn't even know why his disciple got to this state in the first place.

After thinking a bit, he glanced at Sunwu Jo Duk and steeled his resolve.

‘This isn't a good time for this to happen.’

Come to think of it, the boy's coronation should be happening soon. Preparations for that were being made, and there really wasn't any time for the main character of the event to be sleeping like that.

‘I'm sorry, but I'll have to wake you up, disciple.’

Gongson Chun Gi decided to take his consciousness and use it to forcefully wake Cho Ryu Hyang.

Gongson Chun Gi's eyes began to be filled with red energy. He was activating a sort of a mind's eye technique (心眼術).

‘Come to think of it, something like this happened in the past, huh.’

Didn't he wake his unconscious disciple like this in the past? He

could still see his disciple's shocked face when he showed himself in the boy's dream.

‘Shall I go surprise him this time, too?’

Gongson Chun Gi smiled playfully, and focused. Normally, getting into another person's brain wasn't an easy task.

But Gongson Chun Gi just happened to be extremely talented at these kind of techniques. That was why he just jumped into Cho Ryu Hyang' mind without much worries. But.....

‘Eh?’

The first thing Gongson Chun Gi saw was darkness. He frowned and waved his hand. He didn't like seeing something so dark in his disciple's dream.

The darkness faded away with the wave of his hand. This time, an empty white space appeared in front of Gongson Chun Gi. His eyebrows twitched a bit as he looked at this scenery.

“What the hell are you trying to pull? Come out.”

There was someone in this place. Gongson Chun Gi could clearly feel it.

But it seemed that the opposing party had no intention of

revealing himself. The man simply hid in the white shadow, observing Gongson Chun Gi.

“Che, you seem to be an annoying one. You think I can’t find you if you hide?”

Gongson Chun Gi clicked his tongue, then he clapped his hands together then opened his arms out widely. When he did so, countless butterflies with blood red wings flew out.

“Find him.”

When Gongson Chun Gi said this, all the butterflies began to gather towards a single place. They eventually gathered to a single spot and formed into a vague shape of a human.

[You really are quite talented.]

Paan–

With a sound of something breaking, the butterflies all flew away. What appeared was an old man holding a white feather fan on one hand.

Zhuge Liang.

He had finally revealed himself.

Chapter 61. Mysterious Old Man

Gongson Chun Gi stroked his beard as he stared at his opponent. An old man with a feather fan. Gongson Chun Gi could feel that the man had immense pride based on the man's arrogant voice.

But the strange thing was, Gongson Chun Gi had never seen the man in his life.

“Seeing how you are able to destroy the Dream Blood Butterflies (夢血蝶), you must have quite a bit of skill. Just who are you, old man?”

Zhuge Liang. He fingered the tip of his fan and smirked. It was as if he was astounded by the fact that Gongson Chun Gi even said such a thing.

“Ignorant fool. Who do you think you are, trying to judge me with just petty tricks?”

“Hoh? You seem pretty confident. That's good.”

Gongson Chun Gi grinned in amusement. Who was this man? Why was a man like this even here in the first place? Quite a lot of questions floated atop his head, but he refrained himself from asking them.

The questions were something that had to be resolved at another time.

“You wouldn’t answer even if I asked you who you are nicely, would you?”

Zhuge Liang smiled, and nodded.

“Find out for yourself.”

Gongson Chun Gi grinned. That was just what he wanted. It should be alright to ask questions after defeating the old man.

“This is going to hurt, you know.”

Zhuge Liang flapped his fan leisurely as he responded to Gongson Chun Gi’s threat.

“Come.”

Gongson Chun Gi grinned like a child. This was just what he wanted. Moreover, he could feel the opponent’s immense pride from that answer.

Just who, just who under the heavens could show this much pride to him? Gongson Chun Gi could feel excitement from this new experience.

’This’ll be fun.’

Gongson Chun Gi was filled with interest. While it wasn't as much as martial arts, Gongson Chun Gi really was confident in magic. It wouldn't be a lie to say that the thing he was best at after martial arts was magic.

The Heavenly Demon Church has quite a lot of good magical techniques. They had an astronomical amount of it. Gongson Chun Gi, who read all of it out of boredom, knew about all the magical techniques the church possessed.

Gongson Chun Gi never had a proper teacher, however. That was because even if no one taught him how to utilize his techniques in a more useful manner, his strength already rivalled that of a first-rate.

‘For now.....’

What should he do first? Gongson Chun Gi could see that his opponent was very talented.

If he used a weak technique, he'd just be humiliated. He needed to use an extremely powerful technique that could overwhelm the enemy with a single hit.

Gongson Chun Gi thought about the technique he should use, but then frowned as if he had seen something. He stared at Zhuge Liang intently, and let out a small groan.

“Old man, could it be that you’re.....”

“Did you see something?”

Zhuge Liang’s arrogant eyes filled with surprise. What did he see? There shouldn’t be anything Gongson Chun Gi should be able to see here.

Gongson Chun Gi stared at the old man in front of him for a while with a frown. Soon enough, he scratched the back of his head and smiled.

“Interesting. To think I’d meet a person of the same calibre (同流) as me here.”

Same calibre. Zhuge Liang smiled when he heard Gongson Chun Gi’s words, and shook his head.

“Don’t be fooled. You are simply a second-rate (亞流). You look good on the outside, but that’s about it.”

Ta—

Zhuge Liang spoke as he lightly slapped his hand with his fan.

“Aren’t you going to come over? If you won’t, I’ll go first.”

“Che, old man, don’t try to tell me what to do. Even my teacher didn’t dare do that to me.”

Gongson Chun Gi grinned, and stretched out his right hand without any warning. It was as if he was trying to grab onto something.

It was a simple and light movement, but this move actually contained a tremendous amount of energy.

Pachichichi—

The air trembled slightly, and Gongson Chun Gi’s right hand disappeared into thin air. It was as if the hand fell into a shroud of fog and disappeared.

Zhuge Liang, who observed Gongson Chun Gi’s moves, became amused.

‘Petty tricks.....’

At that moment, the air in front of Zhuge Liang split open to reveal an empty black space resembling the entrance to hell.

“Let’s start off lightly, yeah?”

As soon as Gongson Chun Gi finished speaking, a giant blue hand appeared from the whole.

A giant hand that resembled those of a corpse. That hand tried to grab onto Zhuge Liang and make the man explode.

But..... When Zhuge Liang lightly flapped the feather fan, the hand exploded violently.

Guooo—!

A sound of a monster's cry resounded from the hole, and the destroyed hand disappeared from the air.

“You're pretty good.”

Gongson Chun Gi made a face of disappointment. He knew his opponent would be able to deal with his spell, but wasn't this dispelled too easily?

He wouldn't be able to measure the opponent's power this way. Right then, Zhuge Liang opened his mouth.

“Stop showing me petty tricks and give me the real thing.”

“The real thing?”

“You're going to get hurt if you don't.”

At that moment, Zhuge Liang's body began to emit a tyrannical aura. But Gongson Chun Gi wasn't even fazed by this. Instead, he actually began to smile.

“Thanks for the advice. But do you really think you can take this on?”

“That's my line.”

“Alright, then.”

Gongson Chun Gi nodded enthusiastically. He, too, knew that he wouldn't be able to get his opponent without going all out.

“Think of this as an honour.”

Gongson Chun Gi raised his arms, and rubbed his eyes lightly. That moment, the world brightened around him.

“Demon Eyes (魔輪眼).....”

When Zhuge Liang said this in a quite voice, a giant red eye appeared above Gongson Chun Gi's head for a moment, then disappeared.

“Pretty go.....”

Zhuge Liang looked down without finishing his sentence. He could feel something gigantic under his feet.

“Too late.”

Dududuk—!

The ground split in half all of the sudden, and rows of sharp teeth revealed itself within. Without any warning, the ground split apart widely.

“This is the end.”

Gongson Chun Gi became elated. The giant mouth that formed on the ground opened its mouth widely, and swallowed Zhuge Liang.

Crack— Grind—

The sound of bones breaking apart could be heard from the darkness of the abyss.

But Gongosn Chun Gi’s face, which had been staring at the ground for a while, slowly turned into a frown. He licked his lips and spoke.

“Damn, I got tricked.”

Gongson Chun Gi turned his head. When he did so, the space next to him swayed and revealed Zhuge Liang.

“As I expected, you were a practitioner of Pang Tong’s magic arts. But you are actually twice as strong as he was.”

Gongson Chun Gi scratched the back of his neck with a dissatisfied face. He then opened his mouth with an uninterested face.

“Compliments won’t work, you know. I already know that I can’t beat you here.”

At first, Gongson Chun Gi assumed that he was inside Cho Ryu Hyang’s dream. But that wasn’t the case. This was a place created by that old man, Zhuge Liang.

The old man was the one who had the advantage from the beginning. There was no way for Gongson Chun Gi to win if he and the old man were of the same strength.

“Who the hell are you, and what are you trying to do with my disciple? I’ll act accordingly based on your answer.”

Gongson Chun Gi said this as he dispelled his Demon Eye. He then sat down on the ground with an extremely relaxed posture. Zhuge Liang grinned when he saw this.

“Reckless, aren’t you.”

There was no way for Gongson Chun Gi to win in here.

If the two met in the real world, then perhaps the result of the battle could be different. But here, there was no way for Gongson Chun Gi to win against Zhuge Liang. Zhuge Liang stared at Gongson Chun Gi for a moment.

Gongson Chun Gi, too, stared at Zhuge Liang. The monsters of the past and the present. These two were constantly trying to pry into each other with their eyes.

After a moment, Gongson Chun Gi grinned as he spoke up.

“You really turned out to be an amazing person. With a lot of secrets, to boot. You really make me wonder who you might be.”

Zhuge Liang smirked.

“There are secrets in the world that are better left alone.”

Gongson Chun Gi nodded when he heard Zhuge Liang’s answer.

“Alright. I’m pretty curious as to what those secrets are, but I’ll refrain from asking them for now. I’m being really lenient right now, so you tell me what I want to know, okay?”

The thing Gongson Chun Gi wanted to know about. It wasn’t

something that important to Zhuge Liang. Because of this, Zhuge Liang decided to tell Gongson Chun Gi about what was going on.

“Your disciple is trying to make a breakthrough.”

“Breakthrough?”

“Yes. I made him enter this state forcefully, which makes everything a bit dangerous, but the kid should be able to overcome it.”

Zhuge Liang fingered his fan as he spoke.

“I understand that I was being a little rushed. You probably had some things planned for your disciple, too. But this really is a necessary thing to do.”

Gongson Chun Gi thought for a moment, then nodded. He finally realised what was going on.

He also realised that the old man in front of him had no ill intentions towards Cho Ryu Hyang. Knowing that, Gongson Chun Gi could relax a little.

“You don’t have a body, huh.”

Zhuge Liang smiled. As expected, this person wasn’t someone he could look at lightly. To think that the man could find out about

that immediately.

“Correct.”

“To think there was a monster that only existed as a consciousness..... I’ve seen something great today.”

Gongson Chun Gi was honestly impressed. Just how strong would one have to get in order to perform such a thing?

“It’s not good to know too much, so you should leave right about now.”

“Wait..... are you perhaps someone from the past that I know of?”

Zhuge Liang mysteriously smiled when he heard Gongson Chun Gi’s question, and waved his fan.

“We’ll stop here, Gongson Chun Gi.”

Paan—

Gongson Chun Gi frowned as he got flown back due to the energy that came from Zhuge Liang’s fan. He still had something he had to confirm, but he got chased out.



“Hurgh!”

“Are you awake, your Holiness?”

“.....Yeah.”

Gongson Chun Gi gulped down the honeyed water Sunwu Jo Duk brought him, and ground his teeth.

“Damn, to think there was someone like that.....”

He lost. To be fair, he was in that man’s dream, but he was still filled with annoyance. After thinking for a bit, Gongson Chun Gi looked at his right hand.

Then.

Crack—!

The skin on his right hand began to rupture, and streams of blood began flowing out. Sun Jo Duk, upon seeing this, widened his eyes and immediately applied medicine.

“Just what kind of a trick is this, your Holiness?”

“I would rather wish that this was a trick. That goddamned old man.”

“Who?”

“You don’t have to know about him. He’s just an arrogant old man.”

He really wasn’t just dreaming. His right hand was damaged quite badly due to the old man’s attack just now.

An attack to the consciousness, depending on its size, were able to show its effects on the physical body to an extent.

If Gongson Chun Gi was damaged this much even when using the Demon Eyes, an ability that boosted the power of the consciousness several times, the technique the old man used must've been extremely terrifying.

Gongson Chun Gi stared at his bleeding hand for a while, then turned to look at Cho Ryu Hyang.

“Hey.”

“Yes, your holiness.”

“Leave him be. Things might actually take a turn for the worse if we try to step in.”

“.....Did something happen?”

Sunwu Jo Duk asked this carefully, but Gongson Chun Gi didn't talk. After all, the experience he had in Cho Ryu Hyang's mind wasn't too important.

He simply looked at Cho Ryu Hyang and whispered quietly.

“Let's fight outside in the future, old man.”

Gongson Chun Gi felt that he suffered quite a bit.

Zhuge Liang stared at Gongson Chun Gi from the space he had created. He then smiled when hearing Gongson Chun Gi complain.

“So there are advantages to living for a long time.”

Zhuge Liang smiled as he fingered his fan. He was happy. Seeing someone with such talent made him happy.

The man was amazing. It was hard to see such talent even back in his day, the age when countless heroes rose and fell.

‘It was fun.’

It’s been a while since he last enjoyed himself like this. He at first saw this meeting as a form of amusement. But even he never expected to have this much fun in this encounter.

Watching Cho Ryu Hyang was already extremely enjoyable, but that child called Gongson Chun Gi was pretty interesting, too.

While he had been smiling, Zhuge Liang could suddenly feel something break. When he turned his head to look at what happened, he froze for a moment.

“.....Could it be?”

A part of the ground was ripped open completely. After surveying the area for a minute, Zhuge Liang made a dumbfounded face. To him, this face was an extremely rare expression that only came up in cases of extreme surprise.

“.....It seems this age will turn pretty interesting.”

Gongson Chun Gi's attack that swallowed him a while back. That attack had actually taken a chunk of Zhuge Liang's space itself.

“So he wasn't all talk.”

Zhuce Liang grinned.

Gongson Chun Gi. If that man attacked him with full strength, even Zhuge Liang, the owner of this space, would suffer quite a bit.

He had thought that he thought highly of Gongson Chun Gi, but that wasn't the case at all. It seemed that he was underestimating the man far too much instead. Zhuge Liang stared at the ground, and began to let out a hearty laugh without even realizing it.

Chapter 62. A Tenacious Man

In the past, when Gongson Chun Gi was crowned as the heir of the church, there were two senior brothers above him.

The two of them were people of great talent, as they were chosen personally by the Pope at the time. It was unfortunate that they were at the same generation as Gongson Chun Gi.

One of them realized that Gongson Chun Gi had more talent than he, and left the church when Gongson Chun Gi became crowned. The other stayed secluded from the church, abiding by the church's rules.

The Church had something known as the Law of Blood. This made it so that the former disciples of the Pope would be unable to stay within the church once the Heir was crowned.

This happened due to the fact that the Pope's influence might be affected by the former disciples. It was normal for the former disciples to either be expelled from the church, or be killed off.

But Gongson Chun Gi let the two 'seniors' stay within the church.

This event took place when Gongson Chun Gi took in a disciple, and the time when the rumor that the Pope took in a disciple began to spread.

“Master, I heard something strange when I went out today.”

“What?”

“They were talking about how the Heir was already chosen?”

“Yeah. I heard, too.”

“What’s going to happen to us now, then?”

“What do you mean, what’s going to happen? We’re basically screwed.”

“.....N, no. You told me you’d make me the Pope!”

“As you can see, doing that’s nearly impossible now. Please understand.”

“Master!”

“I’m sorry. This master of yours is incompetent. You should find your own path now.”

“Don’t give up already, and do something!”

No Jin Nyung (努珍寧) cried out whilst ripping out his hair.

The old man in front of No Jin Nyung was watching his disciple silently. That old man was Gongson Chun Gi's senior brother, Gwon Gang Min (勸狂憫), the Berserking Blood Demon (血手狂魔).

The man took away the fishing pole he held in his hand out of the pond water, and shook his head.

“It's a person that Gongson Chun Gi chose personally. There's no way you can win. It's better to give up.”

The man said this with a very clear and concise voice.

But No Jin Nyung just couldn't take it. After all, this matter concerned his life itself.

“.....You clearly told me that I was unmatched under the heavens, and that we could conquer the heavens together!”

Gwon Gang Min widened his eyes when he heard this from his disciple.

“I did?”

“Master!”

No Jin Nyung desperately spoke out to his master. Gwon Gang Min became a little troubled when he saw his disciple like this.

No Jin Nyung. The boy was someone he took in when he started to get older. And it wasn't a lie when he told the boy that the boy's talent was unmatched under the heavens.



‘But.....’

Gwon Gang Min scratched the back of his head. The thing was, his disciple had a terrible weakness.

‘To put it nicely, he has a very straightforward and honest personality.....’

No Jin Nyung trusted people too easily. And once he was told to do something, he would try to finish the task he was given without stopping.

At one point in time, Gwon Gang Min got tired of No Jin Nyung pestering him, and told the disciple to go count all the pinecones on the mountain. He found his disciple still counting the pinecones half a year later.

His disciple was just that ‘pure’. But Gwon Gang Min saw his disciple in a different light.

‘This guy’s an idiot!’

Right. This guy was an idiot. At least, that was how it was to Gwon Gang Min.

After all, the world used the word ‘pure’ and ‘stupid’ the same way. Gwon Gang Min looked at his disciple for a moment with a sorrowful face.

‘He’s already a peak expert.....’

Come to think of it, No Jin Nyung was already 28.

But was it because of his ignorance of the outside world? The man looked like he was in his late teens. But the man himself trained day and night when he should've taken the time to go out and play a little.

‘Poor child.’

No Jin Nyung really was too pure.

Gwon Gang Min thought hard. Honestly, No Jin Nyung's talent by itself was good enough to enter the top ten in all the world.

‘But one doesn't become a Pope with just strength.’

Of course, strength was something one needed when becoming the Pope, but with just that, it was impossible to become a Pope.

The Pope is a leader. The Pope needs to be able to have good decision-making skills, determination, motivation, and the power to be able to gather people to his side.

No Jin Nyung definitely was a very talented child, but he also had downsides that were almost as big as his talents.

‘Did I go too far...?’

To be honest, Gwon Gang Min nowadays was very bored. Well, as his position as the senior brother of the Pope, he could live the rest

of his life without any worries at all.

But it wasn't like he had much power within the church itself. Instead, he had to stay in the church trying to be as quiet and unnoticed as possible. This made Gwon Gang Min feel quite useless, which led him to taking in a disciple. And that disciple was No Jin Nyung.

'This is retribution.'

When he thought back on it, everything was his retribution. And the greatest victim of this was his disciple. Gwon Gang Min realized that the heavens never missed out on anything, and became mesmerized by the thought.

'Truly amazing.'

Gwon Gang Min nodded after staring at the sky for a bit. It was his responsibility to take back the seeds he sowed.

Gwon Gang Min steeled himself, and began to put down the fishing rod on his hand. Then, he immediately thought of something, and lightly pushed away his crying disciple.

"Be calm. We still have a chance."

No Jin Nyung's eyes immediately sparkled fiercely. Gwon Gang Min actually flinched a little inside when he saw this, but pretended to not see it as anything significant, and opened his

mouth.

“As long as you show that you have more talent than the Heir, you should be able to succeed.”

“How would I do that?”

Gwon Gang Min felt a bit of guilt when he saw his disciple’s eyes clear of any suspicion. But he had to do it.

“You can do it as long as you get into the harmonious stage. As long as you do that, becoming the Pope won’t be a dream.”

“.....As long as I become a harmonious expert?”

“Yes. You’ll have a chance if you manage to do it.”

This would be an impossible task, even with that massive talent his disciple had. The only reason he suggested this to his disciple was because he thought the boy would give up after hearing it.

‘Forgive me.’

Gwon Gang Min looked up at the heavens, and prayed for forgiveness.

But as always, the will of the heavens wasn’t something a mere

mortal could comprehend.

No one could ever suspect that the idiotic disciple would actually break into the harmonious stage in just a few weeks.

Gwon Gang Min just didn't know if he should laugh or cry when he got faced with this situation.

“Master, I can become the Pope now, right?”

“.....”

He just couldn't manage to tell the truth in front of this overly excited disciple of his.

‘Dear God, isn't this a little too much?’

Only now did Gwon Gang Min truly regret his actions.

From a young age, No Jin Nyung liked simple things. He just didn't like complicated things by nature.

Even when fighting other kids his age to pick the boss out of the group, No Jin Nyung never lost, even when being matched up with bigger kids.

To him, the other kids were making unnecessarily complicated movements.

To No Jin Nyung, even the punches and the kicks performed by the children seemed too complicated. This was why the kids couldn't win against No Jin Nyung.

‘As simple as possible.’

Simple and easy. Simple and fast (單純明快). This was the one thing No Jin Nyung always lived by.

One day, during the time when No Jin Nyung lived in the small mountain town, a large amount of bandits invaded the town.

“Kill everyone except for the females!”

“Yes, boss!”

Like any other thieves and bandits, these people were here to steal. They were here to take away lives, and steal anything that could be of value.

At the same time, these people kidnapped all the young women in the town. To them, this small town was a very good hunting ground that had little to no resistance against them.

‘Am I about to die here?’

No Jin Nyung watched his house burn away from a nearby shack. His family died in front of his eyes, but he couldn't do anything to save them.

The bodies of his parents were still exuding hot blood.

Young No Jin Nyung was sad. He was so sad and mad at the same time, he just wanted to run out and throw a stone at the bandits.

But he didn't. He just decided to think simply instead. If he runs out now, he dies. And dying here would truly be foolish.

When he thought like this, the sadness he felt strangely subsided a little. While he had been consoling his mind like this, the bandits started setting fires everywhere.

Because of this, the shack was no longer a place that could shelter No Jin Nyung. This was because the bandits set fire to that, too. The smoke from the flames made breathing much harder.

His lungs stung, and his breathing became irregular. If he went outside now, though, he would die. No Jin Nyung thought as fast as possible while suppressing himself from coughing.

‘What should I do?’

No Jin Nyung tried to think as simply as possible. After all, he

was always supposed to think simply, and easily, right?

‘Staying inside would kill me, and going outside would kill me.’

Then which one would hurt less?

‘Getting stabbed to death sounds a little better than burning to death.....’

When he thought about it, his reasoning made sense. Because of this, No Jin Nyung crawled out of his hiding place. Thankfully, the bandits were gone.

It seemed they went to a different part of the town after setting fire here. No Jin Nyung sighed in relief, and began to look around a bit. The outside was horrifying to behold.

No Jin Nyung’s family was dead, and his neighbors shared the same fate along with their burnt houses.

Young No Jin Nyung began to think immediately in this situation. As simple as possible. He began to think about what he could do at that moment.

Survival came first. To accomplish that, he had to avoid getting caught by the bandits.

‘How?’

While he had been organizing the tasks he had to do in the simplest manner, the heavens sent him a savior.

“I just came here to eat..... what’s with all this mess?”

An old man was observing the destroyed town while scratching the back of his head. When he saw the corpses lying on the ground starting from the town entrance, he sighed.

“Just how much of a sinner was I in my past life?”

The man walked towards the bandits while sighing.

“Who’s that?”

The boss of the bandit group watched the old man approach them, and frowned.

“I told you to kill everyone, didn’t I? Why’s an old man like that still alive? Do you guys have a death wish or something?”

The old man, Gwon Gang Min, laughed bitterly. This was because he could see the bandits surrounding him.

“The heavens are testing me again.”

He wanted to avoid unnecessary murder, but the heavens would sometimes tempt him with events like these. And Gwon Gang Min happened to be a person who fell for temptation quite easily.

One of the bandits surrounding him tried to chop Gwon Gang Min's neck.

“I should get back to the church soon.....”

Gwon Gang Min, who had been speaking to himself, flicked away the sword with a finger, and opened his mouth with a sorrowful face.

“Try to be a kinder person when you get reborn, okay?”

“K, kill him!”

A cyclone of blood spouted upwards as soon as the bandit boss issued his command. The hundred bandits that was in the area were instantly killed due to the huge difference in martial prowess.

“Ohh, my waist.....”

His body wasn't like it was in the old days. Gwon Gang Min lightly massaged his waist a bit, and entered a random house right next to him. He could find No Jin Nyung, who was petrified in place with a dumb expression on his face.

“Mind if I have a meal here?”

No Jin Nyung just stared at his future teacher with a dumb face.

‘Simple.’

The movements of the old man just now wasn’t complicated at all. It was very simple, and easy. The movements were almost at the pinnacle of simplicity itself. Simple movements without anything wasted.

“Who’re you?”

“Me? I’m Gwon Gang Min.”

The relationship between the two began here.

No Jin Nyung didn’t tell this to his teacher this yet, but he was actually extremely close to breaking through into the harmonious stage already.

It was right there in front of his eyes, almost as if he could catch it with his bare hands. He even felt that he could actually grab hold of it with enough work.

Others would practice day and night in order to break through

when they reached this state, but No Jin Nyung wasn't like this. His reason for this was very simple.

‘I'll get there eventually, anyways.’

The harmonious stage was definitely something within No Jin Nyung's grasp.

These words would make others extremely surprised, but to No Jin Nyung, this statement wasn't much.

The Godly realm that was far above the harmonious stage seemed too far for him, but the harmonious stage itself seemed reachable. This was the reason why he didn't try too hard to break through.

‘I'll get there all in due time.’

That was how No Jin Nyung thought. But one day, there came a time when he had to start working harder.

‘The Heir has been chosen.’

The news was extremely shocking to him. He was thinking of becoming a Pope all his life, and then this happened? He immediately went to his master to talk about this matter.

But as always, his master was neutral on this matter. This was because his master was a person who always went with the flow of

the world.

‘This isn’t right.’

Even if the master was someone he had revered and respected all his life, the decision his master made seemed wrong. Then, his master gave him an answer.

“You can become the Pope once you reach the harmonious stage.”

Right. As expected, his master was amazing. His master always seemed so neutral on everything, but usually took everything very seriously in reality.

‘I just have to reach the harmonious stage.’

No Jin Nyung decided to think simply. If he gets into the harmonious stage, he becomes the Pope. It was as simple as that.

And so he worked. He forcefully grabbed onto that thing that was right in front of him all this time. Thanks to that, a new harmonious expert was born in this world.

And No Jin Nyung would become a figure that heavily influenced Cho Ryu Hyang in the future.

Chapter 63. Gongson Chun Gi's Curiosity

Cho Ryu Hyang tried to move his body consciously, but soon gave up.

No matter what he did, his arms or legs wouldn't lift up. It was almost as if he didn't even have any limbs.

‘I need something different.’

He needed to do something different from what he was trying till now. He had finally realized that trying to move his body by force wasn't going to work.

Cho Ryu Hyang began thinking. He needed to try something new.

‘What can I do in this state, though?’

He could neither see nor feel. It really was as if his consciousness was floating around in space without a body.

The only thing Cho Ryu Hyang could do at the moment was to ‘think’.

‘Think?’

As soon as Cho Ryu Hyang thought of that word, he felt some kind of a jolt from his body. It seemed that he was nearing some

kind of a solution.

‘This is it!’

To be honest, there wasn’t much Cho Ryu Hyang could do at the moment other than to think. But that was enough. The solution to finding out about the ‘world inside the body’ didn’t seem to be as complicated as he thought.

‘What should I think about?’

For now, he thought of the verses within the Moon Edge Blade Technique. Since it was only about thirty characters long, he went through the whole thing in an instant.

Cho Ryu Hyang desperately held onto these verses. He believed that the key to escaping this situation lay in these words.

He recited the verses tens of times in his mind, but he didn’t feel anything special happening. Cho Ryu Hyang began to get anxious again when he was confronted with this.

‘I don’t have much time.....’

Zhuge Liang told him that it would be dangerous to stay in this state for too long.

‘Imprisoned in my own body, was it.....’

It was simple, yet terrifying at the same time. What would it be like to be trapped in one's own body? It was terrifying to behold.

Cho Ryu Hyang steeled his resolve once more. He needed to avoid wasting too much time.

‘Come to think of it, am I even breathing properly?’

This was honestly what worried him the most. Were his lungs functioning properly in this state? How weak was his breathing at this point?

While Cho Ryu Hyang thought of all these things, something changed in his body.

‘Eh?’

Cho Ryu Hyang could suddenly feel the movement of his lungs in his mind. It expanded and contracted weakly, but it nevertheless kept maintaining a steady rhythm.

He could then begin to see his lungs in front of him. Cho Ryu Hyang immediately paid attention to this strange phenomenon. Then, he began to try visualize his heart instead out of curiosity.

Then, the scene in front of him changed. This time, he could see his heart beating.

‘This is it.’

He didn’t know why, but he could see and feel his organs just by thinking about it.

Seeing this new change made Cho Ryu Hyang happy, but curious at the same time. Just why was this happening?

‘Would this be the world inside the body?’

Even if it wasn’t, it would definitely be related. After a while of thought, some kind of a plan began to formulate within his mind.

Even Cho Ryu Hyang didn’t know what the plan actually was going to be like. But he wasn’t disappointed. Instead, he began to focus as hard as possible.

‘Things are going to get important from here.’

He had to try to dig in as far as possible into the small clue he attained.

Cho Ryu Hyang tried looking at all the organs of his body, expecting to find something.

But the ‘world inside the body’ that Cho Ryu Hyang was trying to find was located in none of these organs.

When Cho Ryu Hyang returned to observing his own heart, he felt some kind of understanding slip into his mind.

‘Could it be?’

The blood that flowed out of the heart. Cho Ryu Hyang quietly observed its movements. The blood flowed out of the heart, and spread all around the body through the blood vessels.

It made him think of one thing.

‘Circulation.’

The blood that came from the heart was the same throughout. It would flow throughout the body, constantly getting murky and clear. It circulated through the body without stopping.

‘Talking, moving, breathing.....’

Wasn’t all this actually a part of a great circulation as well? He just never realized it all this time.

The things his body did naturally without having him even notice it. When he ‘noticed’ these activities, he was able to see the human body in a completely different light.

He would be able to use the greatest amount of power with the

least possible amount of energy. This alone was capable of giving him limitless power.

With this, Cho Ryu Hyang was breaking through the first gate of the Moon Edge Blade Technique.

Ryun, the core of the Moon Edge Blade Technique. It was getting completed by Cho Ryu Hyang after a hundred year's time.

Gongson Chun Gi sat down on the pagoda at the garden, and just stared at the man made lake in front of him.

In the past, he would come here whenever he was troubled. He would sit here and think about his problem calmly.

He was thinking alone in the pagoda, just like in the past.

‘Who was it?’

There was only one thing that made Gongson Chun Gi so troubled at the moment. It was the old man that existed inside Cho Ryu Hyang's mind.

They only met once, but Gongson Chun Gi was able to see that his opponent possessed unfathomable power. He had never felt something like that before in his life.

That made him happy. Gongson Chun Gi spoke quietly under his breath with a smile.

“So that secret you were harboring was actually that old man.....”

Cho Ryu Hyang. When he thought of his disciple, Gongson Chun Gi smiled. He could tell that his disciple tried to tell him something for a long time, but was hesitating whenever he tried to talk.

Gongson Chun Gi was curious as to what secret was, but he didn't dwell on it as he believed his disciple would tell him in the future.

But the secret his disciple held was much bigger than he had expected. Just how was the boy able to get a ridiculous old man like that in his body?

“Hn, just what should I do.....”

Should he directly ask his disciple? Or should he just wait? Gongson Chun Gi organized his thoughts a little, and thought about the old man again.

‘Wait, didn't that guy say that he saw a trace of Pang Tong within me?’

Gongson Chun Gi's eyes sparkled. Pang Tong was a name of a

very famous individual in the past.

“No, it couldn’t be.”

Pang Tong. The genius strategist in the Romance of The Three Kingdoms. Gongson Chun Gi’s eyes immediately flared up when he thought up to here.

The genius of all geniuses that came up whenever Pang Tong came up. This individual’s name popped up in Gongson Chun Gi’s mind.

‘Crouching Dragon (臥龍), Zhuge Kongming (諸葛孔明).’

The hero who dominated the chaotic era of the past. When he thought of Zhuge Liang’s name, he immediately tried putting that legendary hero together with the old man inside Cho Ryu Hyang.

Surprisingly, the two matched perfectly. Gongson Chun Gi’s mouth curled up into a malevolent grin.

“Right. So..... Crouching Dragon was actually him?”

Gongson Chun Gi was certain that he was right.

“So that was the reason why I lost.”

If that old man was someone like Zhuge Liang, just battling the man in itself was amazing.

“Well, you’d need someone of that caliber to battle the likes of me in the first place.”

Gongson Chun Gi suffered quite a bit after the battle with that old man.

But when he realized that the old man was actually Zhuge Liang, his anger calmed quite a bit. The fact that he fought Zhuge Liang even made Gongson Chun Gi a little proud.

Right then.

Gongson Chun Gi opened his eyes, and turned his head. He smiled.

“Oh? Who’s this?”

Gongson Chun Gi. He stood up and grinned brightly. For once, he began to speak with a tone filled with respect, not playfulness.

This was, of course, restricted only to private places, but the individual in front of Gongson Chun Gi was the only person who he could truly speak to with comfort.

“It’s been awhile, junior brother.”

Gwon Gang Min. He had come to the garden.

“I didn’t know senior brother would actually come here. Is there anything bothering you?”

“Do I have to come to see you only when I have a problem?”

“Well, that’s not the case, but.....”

Gongson Chun Gi smiled.

“Didn’t you avoid me quite a bit all this time?”

Gwon Gang Min faked a slightly hurt expression.

“There was no choice, right? The situation called for it.....”

Gwon Gang Min took care of Gongson Chun Gi like a brother since long ago due to their age difference.

The situation took quite a turn, so their relationship became a tad bit strange, but Gongson Chun Gi still thought of Gwon Gang Min as a brother.

“I’ll get some tea.”

When Gongson Chun Gi sent out an order, the people who stayed nearby began to get busy.

Gwon Gang Min, who was observing this quietly, smiled, sat down, and began to complain loudly.

“Oww, moving even a little bit tires me out so much nowadays. It feels like various parts of my body are broken. It’s almost time for me to go, it seems.”

“Well, you did live quite long, I daresay.”

“Your foul mouth still haven’t changed, eh?”

Gwon Gang Min laughed, and shook his head. He then stared at Gongson Chun Gi and spoke.

“I feel like I’m about to die at any moment, but you seem to be getting healthier every day. I even heard you got yourself a disciple.”

“Yes. He’s pretty good.”

A voice filled with pride. Gwon Gang Min’s face turned a little troubled as he observed Gongson Chun Gi’s face.

“He must be as outstanding as you.”

“Well, he’s pretty good.”

Gongson Chun Gi smiled warmly. If it’s like this, it becomes harder for Gwon Gang Min to speak. He hesitated a bit, but he soon made up his mind, and decided to speak.

“Did you meet my disciple in the past?”

“Your disciple?”

Gongson Chun Gi had heard about it, but he never saw his senior brother’s disciple.

“I never got to meet him.”

“Do you want to try meeting him?”

Gongson Chun Gi stared at his senior brother. His senior brother was a person who hated harming others and getting helped by others. It actually seemed like his senior was pressuring himself to say all this.

‘So there’s something going on here.’

Gongson Chun Gi knew that whatever his senior brother wanted to do, it wouldn’t harm him in any way. He smiled as he sent an answer at his senior brother.

“I’ll try meeting him.”

“Thank you.”

Gwon Gang Min let out a sigh of relief in his mind. He managed to do everything he could for his disciple.

‘Now, it’s your job to manage to catch the Pope’s eye.’

It was almost impossible, but there was a chance that Gongson Chun Gi might actually take a liking towards No Jin Nyung, and take the boy in as a disciple.

After all, an expert at the harmonious stage was a precious individual.

But the chance of that happening was frighteningly low. The only reason why he did all this was to simply let go of the weight in his mind.

Gwon Gang Min thought of his disciple who still dreamed of becoming the Pope, and sighed deeply.



Chapter 64. How To Make One's Buttocks As Big As A Watermelon

In front of Gongson Ahri, who was carrying a mountain of medicine and bandages.

There was a black-haired woman, who wore a tight red palace dress.

“Eh? Young lady, where are you going?”

“Mm.....? It's you, Ling Ling.”

“Yes, it's Ling Ling. By the way, what's that you're carrying?”

“Nn, these are medicine and bandages.”

Gongson Ahri acted a little nervously in front of the black-haired woman. It was almost as if she was intimidated by the woman.

“I know that. But why are you carrying so much of it?”

“Nn, you see, Rin and Ryung are hurt right now.”

“Eh?”

The black-haired woman. She was the grandchild of the chief doctor of the church, Sunwu Jo Duk, and the most beautiful woman in the whole church. Her name was Sunwu Cho Rin (鮮于貂潋).

Sunwu Cho Rin made a confused face, as if she couldn't understand what Gongson Ahri was talking about.

“Those girls are hurt?”

Nod nod. Gongson Ahri confirmed what she said previously. Sunwu Cho Rin's eyes narrowed upon seeing Gongson Ahri's actions.

“So you're bringing them all this for them?”

“Nn.....”

“.....Follow me.”

Gongson Ahri got dragged away by Sunwu Cho Rin before she could even resist.



Tak-

When the two stepped into the room, they could see two girls lying down with their buttocks exposed. The two girls were Rin and Ryung.

Sunwu Cho Rin's eyes, which were looking at the lumpy buttocks of the girls, began emitting a dangerous light. Rin first realized that something was going terribly wrong.

She had turned her head while smiling, expecting that Gongson Ahri would be there, but once she saw that the one in front of her was Sunwu Cho Rin, she sprang onto her feet and put back her clothes on.

“Ri, Rin greets the Assistant palace master.”

Ryung, who had been lying down to this point, paled, and sprang up to her feet like Rin.

“Ryung greets the Assistant palace master.”

Ryung too greeted Sunwu Cho Rin while fixing her bottoms. Sunwu Cho Rin, who looked at her with a icy gaze, opened her mouth.

“.....You guys were having quite a bit of fun while I was out, weren't you?”

“T, that is.....”

“That is? You have something to say to me? If you do, say it now. You wouldn't be able to even if you want to after this.”

Rin sweated profusely. She couldn't come up with a proper excuse in this situation.

‘We're screwed.’

Rin noticed Gongson Ahri, who stood with a worried face behind Sunwu Cho Rin, and instantly figured out what had happened.

‘Looks like a sinned quite a bit in my past life.’

Rin thought this in her mind. She tried playing a trick on Gongson Ahri for a tiny moment, and she managed to meet a demon.

‘To think we’d get caught by the Demonic Witch (羅刹魔女).....’

Sunwu Cho Rin was someone who possessed both incomparable beauty and viciousness.

The mad dog of the medicinal house, and the berserking lady of the Ruling Fire House was but a few the names that perfectly described this woman.

If they got caught by her, they wouldn’t even be able to do anything in front of her. But today, they actually got caught by her while playing tricks on their own master.

Sunwu Cho Rin took out the whip on her belt, and spoke as she cracked her whip.

Craack–!

“Any last words?”

Cold chills ran down the two girl’s spines when they saw the

snakelike whip. Rin and Ryun exchanged several glances, then immediately kowtowed in front of Sunwu Cho Rin.

“We, we apologize, Assistant palace master.”

“P, please forgive us, Assistant palace master.”

“No way. You guys need to be hit a few times to wake up.”

Crack!

“Kyaa!”

“Urk!”

“You damn pigs, die! Die!”

Rin and Ryung shouted out from pain because of the immense pain. Gongson Ahri could simply watch without being able to do anything.

“Young Lady.”

“Nn.”

Gongson Ahri looked at Sunwu Cho Rin with frightened eyes. Sunwu Cho Rin scraped off bits of flesh and blood from her whip as she spoke.

“You should beat your underlings about once every four days to make them submit to you. To think they’d try to actually play around with their own master..... those pigs.”

Sunwu Cho Rin spoke this as she grit her teeth from rage. Strangely enough, when she turned her head towards Gongson Ahri, her face took a 180 degree turn into a face with a bright friendly smile. Her face change truly was amazing.

“Find me whenever you need anything. I’ll go and personally punish your underlings. Ok?”

“Nn.....”

Gongson Ahri was unable to say no when faced with the blood spattered face of Sunwu Cho Rin.

Ling Ling, or Sunwu Cho Rin, treasured Gongson Ahri for some reason from a long time back.

She had disregarded the fact that Gongson Ahri looked different from others, and approached the girl with friendliness.

When Gongson Ahri asked why Sunwu Cho Rin liked her so much once, Sunwu Cho Rin smiled and said this.

–Because you’re pretty.

That was it. Because of the honest, simple answer Sunwu Cho Rin gave, Gongson Ahri just couldn’t bring herself to hate the woman.

‘But she’s still scary.....’

She didn’t hate Sunwu Cho Rin, but Sunwu Cho Rin was still scary. Especially when Sunwu Cho Rin punished her subordinates.

Gongson Ahri feared Sunwu Cho Rin, but Sunwu Cho Rin adored Gongson Ahri.

‘So cute.’

Sunwu Cho Rin opened her mouth as she happily watched Gongson Ahri nod.

“By the way, did you hear about the Heir of the church being chosen?”

“Nn.....”

She didn’t just hear about it. She even went to see the heir for herself. But Sunwu Cho Rin, who didn’t know of this, put the whip back on her waist as she asked a question.

“I wonder what he’s like?”

“He has pretty eyes.”

When Gongson Ahri said this, Sunwu Cho Rin paused for a moment.

‘Pretty eyes?’

How did she know? It was almost as if the girl saw the Heir herself!

“You saw him?”

Gongson Ahri hesitated for a bit. Sunwu Cho Rin approached her with a worried face, and spoke as she tightly grabbed onto Gongson Ahri’s hands.

“Young lady.”

“Nn, Ling Ling.”

“I told you before, right? Every one of those damn men are wolves. Don’t you remember me saying that you should always be careful of them?”

“Nn.....”

Gongson Ahri could remember. After all, it was something Sunwu Cho Rin told her every time they met.

“You’re done for if you let your guard down, alright?”

Nod nod.

Sunwu Cho Rin watched Gongson Ahri with a gaze filled to the brim with love. She then stood up urgently, as if she couldn’t let go of something in her mind.

“I have somewhere to be, so I’ll be off.”

“Nn, be careful, Ling Ling.”

“Of course. You be careful, too. Ok?”

When Sunwu Cho Rin disappeared, Gognson Ahri hurriedly took the bandages she had been carrying back into the room.

She looked at the bloody room, and made a sorrowful face. She looked at the bed and spoke.

“I, it hurts, right?”

“.....”

Rin and Ryung didn't respond, and instead buried their faces into their pillows. Gongson Ahri carefully approached both of them, and began to apply medicine on their buttocks.

After a while, Rin poked her face out of the pillow and mumbled.

“.....My buttocks are as big as watermelons, aren't they?”

“Nn. It's like there's two watermelons stuck together.”

Rin smiled at Gongson Ahri's comment, and opened her mouth.

“That's good. I'm probably going to get a lot popular after this, then. I heard men liked women with big butts.....”

“Really? Then you're definitely going to get super popular. Your butts are as big as pumpkins!”

“.....Yeah, I'm going to get really popular.”

Rin and Ryung looked at themselves, and grinned. They both decided to think of this day as the day they got bit by a mad dog.

‘He should be at the medicinal house.’

After Sunwu Cho Rin found out about the Heir’s location, she immediately headed for the medicinal house.

Since she was the granddaughter of the master of the medicinal house, she could get into the house without being hindered by anyone.

But soon enough, she flinched and stopped right in her tracks.

“What are you doing here?”

The old man in front of her, was Sunwu Jo Duk, the master of the medicinal house himself.

“I came to see the Heir of the church, grandpa. Where is he?”

“Why are you trying to see him?”

“Well, since he’s the person who’s going to lead the church in the future, it would be good to get familiar with him, right?”

Sunwu Jo Duk became a little confused. Her reasoning made sense, but when he thought about it, it had a lot of flaws in it, too. Sunwu Jo Duk’s eyes narrowed.

“Cho Rin.”

“Yes, grandpa.”

“Just what are you trying to do here? Be honest with me.”

Sunwu Cho Rin didn't respond immediately. She hesitated a bit, then spoke.

“I'm being honest here, grandpa.”

Sunwu Jo Duk couldn't really believe her, since he too knew just how crazy his granddaughter was, but he decided to forget about it.

He didn't have time to think about these things.

“You wouldn't be able to meet him anyway, so leave.”

Sunwu Cho Rin's lips twitched.

“Why? Even I can't see him? Even if I'm your granddaughter?”

“It doesn't have anything to do with your status. The Heir isn't in a very good condition right now. He needs to rest.”

Sunwu Cho Rin gave into Sunwu Jo Duk's words.

“Alright, fine.”

Sunwu Jo Duk became a little troubled when he saw how easily his granddaughter gave in.

‘Nothing should happen, right?’

Sunwu Jo Duk was a little nervous, but since he had a lot of things at hand, he quickly left the area.

‘I need to confirm something.’

Of course, Sunwu Cho Rin hadn’t given up. Since she was from the medicinal house itself, she was familiar with all the secret passages in it.

That was why she was able to sneak into meet Cho Ryu Hyang without getting noticed by her grandfather.

Cho Ryu Hyang had to be at the best room in the whole place. It shouldn’t be too hard to find him.

Sunwu Cho Rin quickly entered the room Cho Ryu Hyang was staying in. It seemed that she entered the right room, considering the fact that there was a young boy sleeping in the room.

‘Is this him?’

She tried to go get a closer look at him, but she suddenly felt something behind her, and at the same time felt a cold blade against her neck.

“Move and you die.”

“.....”

Sunwu Cho Rin grit her teeth. Just how? How did he get so close to her in such a short amount of time? Her face reddened with shame.

Right then, the area centering Cho Ryu Hyang shook violently. At the same time, the blade on her neck shook a little.

‘Should I try to escape?’

Sunwu Cho Rin considered it for a while, but decided against it. She didn’t know her enemy’s skill, so she decided not to do anything.

She had made a wise decision. Her opponent was Un Hui, an expert at the harmonious level. While Sunwu Cho Rin was organizing her thoughts.

The boy on the bed lifted his body to a sitting position. The boy looked at Sunwu Cho Rin with a very mysterious gaze, and opened his mouth.

“Who are you?”

This was the first meeting between Cho Ryu Hyang and Sunwu Cho Rin.

Chapter 65. I Just Don't Like Men

The Heavenly Demon Church was a massive organization with more than ten thousand members.

Because of that, the church was naturally split into four subgroups. These groups were the four families that led the Heavenly Demon Church.

Tian (天), Long (龍), Duan Li (段里), Sunwu (鮮于).

These were the names of the four families.

It wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that these families were the ones that controlled the whole church.

The four families (四大家門).

They were the families which had produced countless Guardians and Popes. They were extremely powerful because of this.

But once Gongson Chun Gi appeared, they weakened considerably.

Gongson Chun Gi.

He was from the Gongson family (公孫世家), which was a small family no one really bothered caring about located in the outskirts

of the church grounds.

Gongson Chun Gi was simply a product of luck that came about within the tiny family, so the four families didn't worry about anything too much.

They just decided to aim for the next spot as the Pope. But something unexpected happened: Some kid called Cho Ryu Hyang appeared out of nowhere, and became the Heir.

This was a little different. The situation was turning a little dire at this point.

At a giant round table inside a certain building, were four chairs, each facing North, South, East, and West. There was an old man sitting in each of the chairs. They were the leaders of the four families.

“We can't just let this one pass.”

When the old man on the North spoke out quietly, the man on the South nodded.

“Our family agrees.”

“The fact that the Pope took in a disciple is a good thing. But the fact that the boy he took in isn't from the church..... We really can't let this happen.”

Even if someone from a different family other than the four families gets chosen as the Pope, they would just grind their teeth and aim for the next spot.

But to think the Pope would bring in someone from outside..... wasn't this much too dangerous? They could be practically handing over the whole church to a different power.

“Did you talk to the Pope?”

When the man on the South asked this, the man on the North smiled bitterly.

“Of course.”

“What did he say?”

“He said that it wasn't a topic even worth talking about.”

“.....That's not good.”

The leaders of the four families simultaneously sighed. Since their opponent here was the Pope himself, normal methods won't work when taking him on.

The man never listened to anyone around him, and always got his way. The problem was, most of the decisions he had made so

far were good ones.

They had nothing to say against the Pope because of that fact.

“This is serious. What if the power of the church gets used by an external force? How terrifying would that be? And if we manage to make a single mistake, the main church itself could get in danger.”

“That can’t be allowed to happen.”

The man in the West opened his mouth.

“We don’t have a way to change anything, though, am I right? There’s no way the Pope would revoke his decision of taking in a disciple from outside.”

Everyone nodded with a dark expression on their faces. Gongson Chun Gi. The man didn’t turn back on any of his decisions. The Pope surely won’t respond lightly if they suggested to him to get a different disciple.

The one who had the most authority in the history the church after the passing of the Heavenly Demon was Gongson Chun Gi. If anyone were to provoke him, their whole family could get destroyed.

“The fact that this Cho Ryu Hyang would become the Heir would not change. But that doesn’t mean that he would become the Pope, am I correct?”

“What do you mean?”

“We will have to employ our final method of resisting.”

“You mean.....”

“We will have to use assassination.”

“Assassination.....”

The day the Heir becomes an adult.

Unless anything happens to the Heir on that day, anyone other than the elders of the church can challenge the Heir, and he would have to take on that challenge without question.

It was the tradition that was made to prove the Heir's strength. Gongson Chun Gi went through this, as well as all the other Popes that went before him.

It was seen as one of the responsibilities the future leader of the church had to take on.

“Who are we sending out?”

Everyone closed their mouth as soon as someone asked this. Who

should they send? Wasn't this a problem in itself? Just who would go out in order to kill the Heir?

This was a huge problem. The family that would go out would have to take on the wrath of the Pope himself, and they had to have someone talented enough to take on the Heir in the first place.

The four families didn't take Gongson Chun Gi's disciple lightly. The child Gongson Chun Gi chose would definitely become immensely powerful in the future.

Was there someone strong enough to kill an expert like that instantly?

"Recommend someone that is able to take on this job. First of all, it has to be a person from our family. We can't afford to take any chances with this."

The man on the South stood up and spoke.

"I recommend the Hou (后) of our family."

Everyone in the room turned towards the man at the Southern seat.

"Are you confident, Danli family head?"

“Of course. But there’s a condition.”

“Condition?”

The head of the Danli family, Danli Muhan (段里無限), took a look at everyone around him, and quietly opened his mouth.

“The next Pope shall come from our family.”

“.....!”

Everyone’s mouth closed up. What the man had just suggested was something hard to take in. As a leader of a whole family, such a condition was hard to agree to.

“This matter’s worth about that much, don’t you think so?”

When Danli Muhan said this, the other three began to think carefully. Was it truly alright for a Pope to come from the Danli family? After a while, they nodded.

“It’s better than having the church being taken over by an external force, isn’t it?”

When Yong Muhwa (龍武化), the head of the Yong family, responded positively, everyone else nodded.

“Alright. If the Danli family manages to succeed, the next Heir of the Pope shall be from the Danli family.”

Danli Muhan faintly smiled.

“Then the matter has been settled.”

Like this, the dark power within the church began to make its move.

The moment Cho Ryu Hyang woke up, Un Hui took away his blade and sat next to the bed.

“My lord!”

He was worried. Un Hui didn't sleep for several days, and guarded Cho Ryu Hyang during that time. His worried emotion were clearly displayed in his voice.

Cho Ryu Hyang took a look at Un Hui, and calmly opened his mouth.

“I'm sorry for worrying you.”

Cho Ryu Hyang was able to imagine just what Un Hui was doing while he was unconscious. That made him feel sorry. Un Hui did

nothing wrong, but still felt guilty about it.

Cho Ryu Hyang stood up Un Hui, and turned to Sunwu Cho Rin.

“Let’s get some light in here, first.”

Since it was almost night time, the room was dark. When Un Hui turned on the light, Cho Ryu Hyang made a surprised face.

The woman in front of him was surprisingly beautiful. The same went for Un Hui. Sunwu Cho Rin coldly smiled inside when she saw their surprised faces.

It was an obvious reaction. After all, her beauty was enough to make anyone, regardless of age or gender, fall for her. Everyone made the same face when looking at her for the first time.

‘Men are all the same.’

Whether it be a boy, or an old man, all men went crazy when looking at something beautiful. Sunwu Cho Rin simply hated it.

She hated men with a passion. She was able to see their intent much too clearly. The fact that these men tried to conceal it, disgusted her.

Cho Ryu Hyang was surprised by something other than Sunwu Cho Rin’s beauty, however.

‘76?’

It was an extremely high number. The strange thing was, Cho Ryu Hyang didn’t even focus, and yet was able to see the number instantly.

He just ‘thought’ that he would like to see it, and he was able to see the person’s number. The body adapted naturally to his thoughts.

Cho Ryu Hyang didn’t show it, but he was quite happy at the moment. He had finally managed to understand something completely.

‘Ryun.....’

The Moon Edge Blade technique really was strange. The moment he understood Ryun, he was able to understand everything that came after it. Out of the thirty verses of the technique, he was able to understand ten of it.

Once he understood one thing, the rest followed. Only then was Cho Ryu Hyang able to agree with Ak Jung Pae’s statement in the book.

‘So he really didn’t know any martial arts.’

Martial arts, according to Cho Ryu Hyang's knowledge, started off easy, and became harder as time passed.

But it was the opposite when it came to the Moon Edge Blade technique. The starting point was the hardest, and the rest was easy. Of course, he didn't understand everything about the Moon Edge Blade technique just yet, but the last 20 verses would be very easy after this.

Everything would come together if he understood just a single thing. When he thought about this, he could only smile.

This was only a start, but he had already understood a significant portion of the Moon Edge Blade Technique.

‘As expected, I can't trust this guy.’

Sunwu Cho Rin bit her lips when she saw Cho Ryu Hyang smile. She misunderstood the meaning of the smile. She initially came here to see what the boy Gongson Ahri fell for would be like.

As she had already expected, the boy was already tainted. That was the conclusion Sunwu Cho Rin had reached.

“The assistant Palace Master of the Ruling Fire House, Sunwu Cho Rin, greets the Heir. This one heard that the Lord Heir was resting here, and decided to come over.”

Coming over to greet him, at such a late time? Cho Ryu Hyang

became a little confused when hearing that, but decided to not think about it. Since he was in an extremely good mood, he was very lenient at the moment.

Right then, Un Hui [messed](#) him from besides the bed.

(TL Note: Never really explained the “messages” that appear in the novel, did I? These are like telepathic messages that martial artists are able to send to a person nearby. It frequently appears in Korean martial arts novels.)

[This is the psychotic woman of the Sunwu family. Her martial ability is top-ranked. She should be the strongest female martial artist within the church.]

Cho Ryu Hyang nodded. Un Hui’s message made sense. After all, her innate ability alone was overbearing. If Un Hui had told him that this woman was at the harmonious stage, he would easily be able to believe him.

‘So.....’

Sunwu Cho Rin had been looking at him with a disgusted gaze from a while back. Just why was she doing that?

When he thought of that question, it instantly popped out of his mouth.

“You don’t like me, do you?”

Cho Rin flinched, and looked at Cho Ryu Hyang strangely. She was unable to see through Cho Ryu Hyang's intentions.

After thinking a bit, Sunwu Cho Rin decided just to be honest.

“Yes. I don't really like you.”

“.....!”

Un Hui's gaze instantly turned chilly. It was almost as if he was going to attack Sunwu Cho Rin with just a command.

Cho Ryu Hyang smiled when he saw that. He didn't know why, but looking at the scene just made him smile.

‘Not everyone can like me.’

That was something he heard from his father a long time back. And Cho Ryu Hyang just had to agree with the statement. You couldn't be nice to everyone in the world.

No matter what you did, there would always be someone who would disagree with you. After all, that was the nature of human beings.

But it was rare to find someone would state that she didn't like you outright. Normally, one would hide that fact until a critical moment.

Sunwu Cho Rin was different. Just how many would be able to say ‘I don’t like you’ in front of someone without hesitation? To a person above you, at that?

That alone was a kind of courage by itself, wasn’t it? This made Cho Ryu Hyang unable to hate her.

“Would you tell me why you hate me?”

Cho Rin flinched a bit when she saw how calmly Cho Ryu Hyang responded to her. She was the type to act without much thought, so she just spat out whatever came to mind, and was just regretting her actions.

The person in front of her was the Heir of the church. If he felt like it, he could kill her on the spot. When she thought this much, she spoke with a much lighter tone.

“I just don’t like men. You’re a man, too, are you not?”

Cho Ryu Hyang widened his eyes. Her response was something that he didn’t expect at all.

But he decided to accept it. He didn’t know why a beautiful woman like her hated men, but he also knew that everyone had their own tastes.

This was something that Cho Ryu Hyang could try to fix, though, was it? After thinking a while, Cho Ryu Hyang nodded.

“I understand.”

“.....”

Understand? You? Just what do you know about me? Sunwu Cho Rin’s attitude suddenly turned a lot more fierce.

‘Bullshit!’

Cho Ryu Hyang kept talking as Sunwu Cho Rin struggled to prevent herself from saying that.

“So you can keep on hating me like this. As this quality of mine that you hate is not something that I can fix, I apologize.”

“.....”

Un Hui and Cho Rin both made a dumb face once Cho Ryu Hyang said that. That was because they could clearly see Cho Ryu Hyang feeling truly sorry.

‘This kid.....’

This kid was strange. She was treated as a psycho in the church,

but this kid had something strange about him that was a completely different breed from what she possessed.

Cho Rin changed her thoughts about the Heir a little. Then, Cho Ryu Hyang looked at Cho Rin and opened his mouth.

The words that flowed out of Cho Ryu Hyang's mouth didn't carry any feeling of disgust. It was quiet, and monotonous.

“So, you're done, then?”

Cho Rin nodded without saying anything, and then opened her mouth.

“Yes.”

“You can leave, then.”

Cho Rin bid farewell with a dumb face and went out. As she slowly walked back to the Ruling Fire House, she fell to deep thought with a complicated face.

The kid was completely different from what she had initially expected. He might even be something much, much bigger than what she had imagined.

‘But I still can't hand her over!’

The person Gongson Ahri fell for. In order to check this person out, Cho Rin had walked over to meet the Heir.

The fact that she had somewhat accepted the Heir bothered her. For some reason, she wanted to see Gongson Ahri.

Cho Rin walked over to Gongson Ahri's place with a depressed face.



Chapter 66. Gongson Chun Gi's Gift

Cho Ryu Hyang, who came back to the garden, became extremely busy for the next four days. He had to be crowned as the Heir to the church.

The coronation of the Heir. Thanks to the Guardians of the church paying close attention to it, it was steadily becoming a very stable and perfect event.

And finally, the day had come.

Cho Ryu Hyang put on the Black Dragon Robe (黒龍布), the Long Red Shoes (赤長靴) with beautiful gold patterns inscribed onto it, with the small gold crown that symbolized Cho Ryu Hyang's status as the Heir.

All the accessories and the clothes on his body were top-notch, and were made for just today, the Heir's coronation day.



“You look pretty good in those.”

Gongson Chun Gi came over to Cho Ryu Hyang right before the coronation, and smiled. It had been a while since he last saw Cho Ryu Hyang. Because he too was busy for the past few days, he was unable to go see him.

He just finished all his tasks, and managed to find some time to visit. Cho Ryu Hyang looked at Gongson Chun Gi, and spoke.

“The clothes that I’m wearing are so expensive, I can’t even move properly. I don’t even know why people wear these things.”

“Aa. That’s what everyone thinks at first. It’ll do well for you to

get used to those soon, though. You'll have to wear them till you get sick of it."

Cho Ryu Hyang shook his head. It almost seemed impossible to get used to these. They were too inefficient. Gongson Chun Gi looked over at Cho Ryu Hyang. His eyes soon began to sparkle.

"Anyways, it seems you've gained something. Your eyes changed."

Cho Ryu Hyang looked at Gongson Chun Gi. What should he call it? After thinking a bit, he decided to just smile.

The confident smile of Cho Ryu Hyang was all it took to show Gongson Chun Gi that what he gained was not small.

"Oho. It seems you more or less understood Ryun. Good job."

"Something good happened."

"Something good....."

Gongson Chun Gi made a mysterious smile. As expected, it seemed the thing that Zhuge Liang fellow did worked pretty well. It really was 'something good'.

'But.....'

It looked like Cho Ryu Hyang still didn't know that he knew about Zhuge Liang.

Gongson Chun Gi smiled evilly inside. He didn't feel like telling his disciple that he knew about Zuge Liang just yet. It would be interesting to wait till Cho Ryu Hyang told him about it, wouldn't it?

'You're supposed to eat tasty things at the end, after all.'

Gongson Chun Gi made a satisfied smile, and spoke up.

"Now, we can begin learning Shura Environment."

Cho Ryu Hyang blinked. This was too fast. Was it alright to learn something new, especially when he didn't take in the Moon Edge Blade Technique completely?

"This is the best time to learn it. After all, you're body is just about done maturing."

Gongson Chun Gi looked over Cho Ryu Hyang from head to toe, and spoke.

"Shura Environment isn't as gentle as the Moon Edge Blade Technique. It's barbaric and cruel. I took the technique that was already like that, and made it worse. It should be fun for you to learn it."

Cho Ryu Hyang showed an uncomfortable smile in response to Gognson Chun Gi's playful one.

His teacher, who didn't really like fighting, found joy in annoying others. And the victim of his would almost always suffer terribly.

'I'll just have to endure it.'

This was what Cho Ryu Hyang decided to do from the start, anyways. He couldn't complain now.

"You're still set on becoming stronger?"

"Yes. I want to become stronger."

More so than he was now. He wanted strength that would lose to no one. That want for strength just kept getting bigger every day.

"What do you want to do when you become strong? Revenge? What do you want to do after that?"

Cho Ryu Hyang began to think. What would he do after becoming stronger? What comes after revenge?

Cho Ryu Hyang's mind got filled with various thoughts. Gongson Chun Gi looked at his disciple and smiled.

“What do I look like to you?”

What does he look like? What was that supposed to mean? Cho Ryu Hyang looked at his teacher quietly. Recently, he had been feeling the true strength of his teacher.

The Heavenly Demon Church was a small nation. Gongson Chun Gi was the leader who led the nation without any discord whatsoever. He always had an air of carefreeness about him, too.

No matter what happened, he would lead his people out of a crisis wisely. That was the power of Gongson Chun Gi, something that no one could imitate.

“A person who I want to be like.”

Gongson Chun Gi smiled. It was a smile filled with absolute happiness.

“You see, I’ve been feeling very happy recently.”

“.....”

It was a strange response. To think Cho Ryu Hyang would be able to hear something like this from his teacher, who always complained about everything. Gongson Chun Gi tapped Cho Ryu Hyang’s shoulders lightly, and kept talking.

“Never try to make something like a standard when judging others. Never try to consider their feelings, either. Just ask yourself, would making this decision make me happy? You should become extremely greedy. Only then would you be like me.”

His words were dripping with pride.

But how many people would there be, that could tell and teach his disciple something like this?

This was something only Gongosn Chun Gi could do. After all, he really was like that.

“Soon enough, you’ll be the disciple of the strongest person in the world.”

Cho Ryu Hyang’s face flushed as he turned his head away.

“.....It’s true that you’re great, but doesn’t it feel awkward saying something like that outright?”

Gongson Chun Gi tilted his head.

“Why should I be? I’m just telling the truth here.”

“.....”

Cho Ryu Hyang thought that no matter what happened, he didn't want to inherit this aspect of his teacher.

‘Well, I don’t think I can even if I try.’

If he said something like this, the whole place would just turn awkward. But Gongson Chun Gi, on the other hand, seemed extremely natural. Everything he did and said made sense, just like how air existing everywhere made sense.

“We’re starting. Let’s go.”

Cho Ryu Hyang nodded. It was finally happening. The path that he would walk upon. It would be decided here, today.

“I got a special present, just for you, too.”

Present? The first thing that Cho Ryu Hyang felt was fear, thanks to the nature of his teacher. Cho Ryu Hyang looked at his teacher with a curious look on his face, but the only thing he got back was an evil smile.

“It wouldn’t be fun if I told you beforehand, don’t you think? You should learn to be patient.”

“I feel like throwing up.”

Gongson Chun Gi grinned when he saw his disciple's sick face. He could see how nervous Cho Ryu Hyang was.

And his present truly was something that should make Cho Ryu Hyang feel that way. A moment later, Cho Ryu Hyang realized what his teacher's present was, and chewed on his lip nervously.

‘So it was this.’

The coronation proceeded smoothly with many people cheering around him.

But Cho Ryu Hyang couldn't see or hear any of that. He saw one person out of the whole crowd.

‘Father.....’

In the high seats filled with the nobles was a familiar figure. It was Cho Ryu Hyang's father, Cho Mu Ryung. He was looking at Cho Ryu Hyang with a complicated expression.

[How do you like my present?]

Cho Ryu Hyang looked at his teacher. Gongson Chun Gi grinned when he was faced with Cho Ryu Hyang's fierce gaze.

‘As expected, his reaction is enjoyable.’

Seeing how he couldn't bring himself to stop playing with other people like this, it seemed that he matured a little less on this side of things.

‘Well, that’s not all that bad.’

Not being mature had its own perks. Gongson Chun Gi stubbornly thought that, and looked elsewhere.

When he turned to the Sun-Moon Pavilion, he could see No Jin Nyung who had eyes full of envy directed straight at him.

‘That guy’s pretty fun, too.’

It looked like there were all sorts of people out in the world. To be truthful, Gongson Chun Gi met No Jin Nyung right before he went to meet Cho Ryu Hyang. He had the promise with his senior brother he had to keep, and honestly, he was a little curious about what No Jin Nyung was like.

And when he first met No Jin Nyung, he just stood in his spot, doing nothing other than blink.

“How did you of all people get into the harmonious stage?”

That was Gongson Chun Gi’s first question. He couldn’t understand. It should’ve been impossible for No Jin Nyung to become a harmonious expert.

While it was slightly different from what Cho Ryu Hyang possessed, Gongson Chun Gi too possessed Godly Eyes.

He had it from a young age, but he took it and trained it into a new level.

And according to what he saw, it was impossible for No Jin Nyung to become a harmonious expert. He lacked talent.

But somehow, there he was, as a Harmonious expert. Gongson Chun Gi checked No Jin Nyung just to make sure if he wasn't going crazy or not.

“This is my foolish disciple.”

“.....”

Gongson Chun Gi didn't respond to his senior brother, and fell to deep thought while looking at No Jin Nyung. It's been while since he last saw something this unusual.

It was strange, and shocking. Unless something went terribly wrong from the origin of the boy's self, it was impossible for Gongson Chun Gi to make a mistake when observing someone.

“Just how did he get this far.....?”

Gongson Chun Gi thought over and over again. A person, when born, is given a certain degree of talent.

That talent is usually spread out unevenly throughout all subjects, so it often became wasted.

‘Could it be.....’

Could it be that all of the boy’s talent got dumped into martial arts? Was that possible? A feeling of suspicion crept up Gongson Chun Gi’s heart, but after looking at No Jin Nyung once again, nodded.

‘It seems that it’s possible.’

It was possible for the boy to reach the harmonious stage if all his talent was condensed into martial arts.

But that also meant that it was impossible for the boy to be talented at anything else other than martial arts, didn’t it?

‘This is really interesting.’

When he reached an answer, he grinned. The boy in front of him was really interesting. He looked at the boy with a face of wonderment. The interesting boy opened his mouth.

“I want to be a Pope.”

“Nn?”

“I became a harmonious expert to become the Pope.”

What in the world was the boy talking about? Gongson Chun Gi looked at his senior brother curiously, but his senior brother avoided his gaze.

Only then was Gongson Chun Gi able to understand everything. He smiled, and spoke at the same time.

“You say you want to become the Pope?”

“Yes, Your Holiness.”

“What do you want to do when you become one, then?”

What would he do when he becomes the Pope? No Jin Nyung made a dumb face. He just wanted to become the Pope. He thought he would be able to do anything if he was the Pope.

But what did he want to do? Gongson Chun Gi's question penetrated to the bottom of No Jin Nyung's desire, and No Jin Nyung was unable to answer. He didn't manage to think that much yet.

“You would be able to do anything if you are the Pope. Was that

why you wanted to become one?”

“.....Yes.”

Right. A Pope is a Pope because he can do anything. The pinnacle of power, the symbol of awesomeness. Gongson Chun Gi shook his head, as if he had read No Jin Nyung’s thoughts.

“If that’s what you want, you wouldn’t be able to become the Pope. The Pope is someone who can do everything, and at the same time someone who can’t do anything.”

“.....”

“You can’t become the Pope by yourself, can you now? Are you confident enough to be able to lead tens of thousands of people by yourself? Are you confident enough to prevent them from starving?”

“.....”

No Jin Nyung couldn’t respond. He wanted to be the Pope because it seemed cool, and there really was no other reason other than that.

He didn’t take into consideration the responsibilities he had to shoulder as the Pope. He just wanted to become one was all.

Gongson Chun Gi read what No Jin Nyung had been thinking, and smiled.

‘He’s like a child.’

There was a saying that said that it was impossible to know what a person was thinking. It seemed this boy was an exception. Gongson Chun Gi was able to read the boy’s thoughts already, after all.

The boy was the simplest person he had ever met. Looking at him just made Gongson Chun Gi laugh.

Suddenly, he thought of his disciple, Cho Ryu Hyang, and when he placed No Jin Nyung next to his disciple, an interesting picture came up.

“You’ll have to shoulder many things if you become the Pope. Are you confident enough to do that?”

No Jin Nyung thought for a long time, then shook his head. It was impossible. He couldn’t manage to handle something so complicated. Gongson Chun Gi kept talking.

“There is a way for you to get what you want even without becoming the Pope. Want to give it a go?”

No Jin Nyung looked at Gongson Chun Gi with sparkling eyes. Gongson Chun Gi smiled inwardly. He could feel everything turn

out the way he had imagined it to be.

It was really interesting. The picture of Gongson Chun Gi that massively affected the church in the future began right here.

Chapter 67. The Start Of A Bad Relationship

Cho Ryu Hyang couldn't say anything till the cup of tea in front of him turned cold.

It was same for Cho Mu Ryung, Cho Ryu Hyang's father. The two stayed quiet for quite some time.

How much time had passed? The one to speak first was Cho Mu Ryung.

“I should..... congratulate you.”

He had opened his mouth with some difficulty. It was impossible to hide the small tremble that was contained in his voice. Cho Ryu Hyang made an awkward face.

Was it because he came here right after being crowned? The clothes he had on him felt extremely uncomfortable. It was enough to impede his breathing.

‘This is hard.’

He knew how much his father disliked evil. That fact alone made Cho Ryu Hyang feel uncomfortable.

‘But I don't feel that I made the wrong choice in doing this.’

To his father, the Heavenly Demon Church probably looked evil. He could understand that perfectly well. That was how the church was portrayed to be to the general population, after all.

Everyone saw the people of the Heavenly Demon Church to be those who enjoyed murder and rape.

But in reality, it wasn't like that at all. The church had its own set of rules and standards they strictly followed. One could easily see that from Gongson Chun Gi himself. Just what would the subordinates be like if the leader was so disciplined in the first place?

Cho Ryu Hyang wanted to tell his father that. He wanted to show that his choice was not wrong. But he just couldn't bring himself to say anything.

That was because the only thing he saw from his father's eyes were not only regret and sadness, but rage and anger. When Cho Ryu Hyang saw this, he knew that everything he was about to say would be useless.

He just couldn't say a thing. All the things he prepared to say in advance just melted away like snow melting from the spring warmth. When his father spoke, his father's words flowed straight into his molten heart.

“It must've been hard for you.”

“.....”

Cho Mu Ryung was just worried for his son.

He wasn't thinking about where he was, or his safety. He was just worried for his son.

Cho Ryu Hyang couldn't lift his head. He thought he knew what his father was thinking, and he thought he understood his father, but that was just an illusion. Now, all he was just feeling sorry.

“I was able to visit the church thanks to you..... this is a nice experience.”

Cho Mu Ryung quickly changed his topic when he saw his son's gloomy expression.

He thought his son was mature, but that was only among children of his age. His son was still young.

That was why he didn't know about the violent and the dark side of the world. Well, it wasn't like he was saying the Heavenly Demon Church was evil or anything.

‘But.....’

Honestly speaking, Cho Mu Ryung was extremely mad at the church.

Who wouldn't get mad if the church decided to trust a child's decision, and not even consult the parent about it?

But.....

'It's too late now.'

Cho Mu Ryung decided to bury his anger within himself for now.

He knew he couldn't do anything to reverse everything at this point, and also knew that the situation would only get worse if he tried to do anything.

Cho Mu Ryung was not an idiot.

"Your mother is worried. It would be good to come home at least once to talk, but.... that seems a little hard for you at the moment."

He had a rough idea of what had happened thanks to Um Seung Do telling him the whole story during the carriage ride.

He had heard that the position of the Heir was not just symbolic, but had strong influence within the entirety of the church. This made it very troublesome for the Heir to actually leave the church whenever he wanted. The Heir wouldn't be able to leave the church alone till he became able to take care of himself.

It would be extremely troublesome if anything happened to the Heir, after all.

“I had hoped that you would become a merchant.”

Cho Mu Ryung bitterly smiled as he looked at his son. His son was talented at calculations from a young age. He also had talent in reading the flow of money.

He had thought that his son would become an extremely successful merchant, thanks to his ability to instantly solve complex equations.

“But to think you’d become a martial artist.....”

The world never moved as anyone wished. Something that someone wanted to do could change at any time.

But a sense of frustration still swept over Cho Mu Ryung.

“How is the Pope? I had hoped to meet him, but he seemed quite busy.”

“.....He told me that he would come as soon as he gets done with work.”

Gongson Chun Gi was in charge of the entire coronation event. Somehow, Gongson Chun Gi was managing to control the entire

event by himself.

He was doing that just so he could let Cho Ryu Hyang and Cho Mu Ryung have some time alone with each other.

“How is he, in your eyes?”

Cho Ryu Hyang readjusted his glasses. This was a similar question that his teacher had asked him a while back. Thanks to that, he was able to answer the question immediately.

“He’s someone I wish to become.”

“.....”

Cho Mu Ryung nodded when he read the emotion held within his son’s eyes. He saw admiration and determination in those eyes.

“I look forward to it.”

“I hope so.”

Cho Mu Ryung made a surprised face when he heard his son’s confident response.

Since his son was extremely calculative, he never really opened up to others. The child tried to hide it, but the boy would always

consider his choices for a long time before talking.

If the Pope was a person who the boy admired to this degree, then the Pope definitely had something special about him.

‘Would I be able to trust the rumors?’

Cho Mu Ryung fell to deep thought. The rumors that floated around in the martial world portrayed the Pope as some kind of a ‘God’. Of course, they weren’t exactly talking about a “Good God”.

Even when he gathered up all the rumors and picked out the really useful information from them, what he found was quite hard to believe.

Walking on thin air... blasting enemies away with a palm of his hand... these bits seemed a little believable. After all, the rumors regarding this was extremely descriptive.

But the part about turning younger and whatnot was simply unbelievable.

‘Come to think of it, how old is the Pope?’

Martial artists aged relatively slower than normal humans. Of course, the rate in which they actually aged depended on their martial skill. When he thought this much, Cho Mu Ryung’s mind was filled with even more questions.

When he decided to somehow accept the whole situation, curiosity had overtaken his mind.

‘I hope I get to see the Pope quickly.’

On the other hand, Cho Ryu Hyang was waiting for the Pope for a different reason. He believed that his teacher would be able to explain everything he couldn’t at once.

Cho Ryu Hyang believed that his father would accept Cho Ryu Hyang’s decision once he saw the Pope’s way of thinking.

‘I trust you, teacher.’

When he thought that much, a sense of discomfort shot up in his mind. Cho Ryu Hyang immediately frowned, and began thinking.

He suddenly thought of the playfulness Gongson Chun Gi possessed, and became wary of it. Like that, the two of them just sat there waiting for Gongson Chun Gi.

The coronation of the Heir was one of the most important events within the entire church. Everyone was extremely happy during the event, but amongst the happy crowd were two pairs of eyes observing the event with cold eyes.

“What do you think?”

“What?”

“Don’t pretend to be ignorant. What do you think of the boy you have to kill?”

The boy.

No, the teen who seemed a little too old to call a boy smiled, and responded.

“To think a child like that is my enemy, it’s sad. He just looks cute.”

“Do not underestimate him. He’s the boy the Pope chose himself.”

“Of course I won’t underestimate the boy. After all, the great Pope himself chose him.”

The teen.

He flipped his hair back with his hand, and faintly smiled.

“Can I tell you something?”

“What is it?”

“I don’t want to be used as a tool for your dirty little plans.”

Danli Muhan, the head of the Danli family, frowned.

Danli Hou, the most talented child of the Danli family, smiled when he saw his grandfather’s enraged face.

“I’m not a toy, like that little child over there in fancy clothes. If you think you can control me so easily, you’re making a big mistake.”

“.....”

“Even when we were related by blood, you locked up my father just because he was sick. And now you’re pretending to treat my father nicely because of my talent..... you’re disgusting.”

“Y, you.....”

Danli Muhan trembled in rage, but he didn’t dare act out in public.

If he did anything during the event, he would lose much face.

Danli Hou knew that better than anyone, which was why he was

grinning ear to ear as he talked.

“I’ll do what you want, since our interests align for now. But don’t expect anything more than that.”

Danli Hou looked at his grandfather with a grin on his face.

“We’re honestly not that close, right?”

Danli Muhan suppressed his rage. Then, he looked at his grandson calmly, and spoke.

“.....You’re confident that you can win?”

Danli Muhan’s voice was filled with suppressed rage.

But Danli Hou just smiled. Brightly. He knew fully well that his grandfather couldn’t do anything to him.

“You know how skilled I am, don’t you?”

Danli Muhan smiled.

“Fine. I knew that you had some grudges with me from the start. It was my mistake for not knowing that the hatred you harbored for me was this big. Let’s go with whatever you want to do. This is a contract. It would be better for both of us if we don’t think about

blood relations, am I right?”

“Yes. That just makes everything so much better. We wouldn’t have any more bad feelings about each other that way.”

Danli Hou crossed his arms with a smile. His insides were twisting in rage, but he smiled. It was hard for him to do anything other than smile, anyway.

Every one of the family head in the four families emitted a disgusting odor from their body. A disgusting plan was taking place.

But he couldn’t do anything to stop it. He already stepped into the whole thing himself. No matter how much he hated these people, he couldn’t deny the fact that they were on his side.

‘Please, grow as much as you can until you become a man, Lord Heir.’

Danli Hou looked at the heir Cho Ryu Hyang, who was currently going through the biggest coronation in the history of the church.

Once that child, that flower, blooms, he would snap it in half.

That was the fate of Danli Hou.



Chapter 68. Cho Mu Ryung's Choice

Gongson Chun Gi lost a lot of strength trying to get rid of all the Guardians like Guardian Ju and Guardian Wu, who begged him to have a drink with them after taking care of the coronation.

He had managed to escape from them one way or the other, but the road in front of him was blocked by yet another man. When Gongson Chun Gi saw the man, the first thing out of his mouth was a complaint.

“Even you, the medicine man, has business with me? Let me go. I’m tired.”

Sunwu Jo Duk grinned when he saw Gongson Chun Gi’s face that was riddled with annoyance.

“You worked hard trying to shake off those muscle heads.”

“Yeah, I did. Why do they have to be so strong..... they’re probably gonna be healthy for another decade or so.”

“From the looks of it, they’re probably going to easily last several more decades, actually.”

“Damn it, you’re right. So, why were you waiting for me here, anyway? If it’s more alcohol, then I’m done. All that alcohol I drank with those old men made me full.”

Gongson Chun Gi groaned as he pointed at his belly.

“To think I’d do something this dumb because of a disciple..... I didn’t even know you could get full from alcohol.”

“It’s good that you didn’t get drunk.”

“There isn’t any type of alcohol in this world that could make me get drunk.”

When Gongson Chun Gi said this with a smirk, Sunwu Jo Duk smiled with him. Then, he then began surveying the surroundings. Gongson Chun Gi, who became tired of the man’s actions pretty quickly, looked around slowly, then opened his mouth.

“You can just talk. There’s only my people around here.”

Everyone in the area was Gongson Chun Gi’s personal bodyguard. He was basically saying it was ok to say anything since there was only his people around. But Sunwu Jo Duk shook his head.

“It’s..... it’s about my family.”

“The Sunwu family?”

“Yes.”

Gongson Chun Gi licked his lips. This was a matter of a single family. It would be something embarrassing to talk to someone about in the first place.

“You heard him. Move aside while we talk.”

[Yes, sir.]

Lim Hak Gyum quickly disappeared along with the Mara's Wind Brigade. When he did so, Gongson Chun Gi looked back at Sunwu Jo Duk.

“You can talk now.”

There was only Gongson Chun Gi and Sunwu Jo Duk in the area now. Even after knowing that, Sunwu Jo Duk hesitated.

“Why did you ask me to get everyone out of here if you were going to be embarrassed about saying this anyway?”

When Gongson Chun Gi sat down on a nearby bench, Sunwu Jo Duk finally managed to let out a sigh and open his mouth.

“There are strange movements within the church.”

“Strange movements?”

“Yes. It concerns the Heir’s life.”

When Sunwu Jo Duk said this with a determined face, Gongson Chun Gi just looked at him with a calm face.

“And that movement is related to your household?”

“It’s embarrassing, but yes. I failed to manage the household properly.”

When Sunwu Jo Duk looked down with a sorry face, Gongson Chun Gi just smirked.

“So you’re talking about how the four families are planning against my disciple.”

“.....You knew?”

When Sunwu Jo Duk asked this with a surprised face, Gongson Chun Gi lightly nodded his head.

“I was expecting it to happen. You see, I actually happen to be a smart man.”

“I have nothing to say.”

When Sunwu Jo Duk bowed down with an apologetic face again,

Gongson Chun Gi became a little annoyed.

“Why are you being like this? You did nothing wrong here.”

“This is a selfish request, but..... please, the people of my family are young and foolish. Please forgive them with grace.”

If Gongson Chun Gi knew about this plan in the first place, it was safe to say that the likelihood of the plan of the four families succeeding was more or less nonexistent.

Their plan was to kill the Heir. They were using the Life-Death fight of the Heir as an excuse, but in reality, their plan was downright disgusting.

‘A dirty plan.’

It was almost treason, if one thought about it.

If Gongson Chun Gi tried to exterminate the Four Families, he would suffer from a bit of retaliation, but he would achieve his goal easily.

The current Pope was just that powerful. To Sunwu Jo Duk, who was thinking about all the terrible punishments his family would face, Gongson Chun Gi’s answer was very unexpected.

“I’m just gonna ignore them.”

“.....huh?”

What was this? Sunwu Jo Duk was confused. Gongson Chun Gi simply took out a fruit out of his sleeve, and threw it to Sunwu Jo Duk.

“First off, I kind of want to see what they’re going to do..... actually, that’s just about the only reason why I’m letting them off with this.”

Sunwu Jo Duk replied with a bewildered face.

“Just what are you trying to achieve by observing them? These people are just trying to kill the Heir himself.”

Gongson Chun Gi took out another fruit from his sleeve, and bit into it.

Crunch–

Gongson Chun Gi talked whilst chewing the fruit in his mouth.

“Doesn’t matter. And it would be good if they tried assassination. It wouldn’t be a bad attempt on their part.”

“Your Holiness!”

Sunwu Jo Duk shouted out as he frowned deeply. He thought the Pope was going too far with his joke. Wasn't this his precious disciple they were talking about here? Did he truly want to lose his disciple just like that?

“Do I seriously look that dumb to you? Would I be so dumb as to be unable to follow your thoughts, old man?”

Sunwu Jo Duk closed his mouth. That wasn't the case. The man in front of him was the greatest man in the world. Come to think of it, wouldn't the Pope have already come up with a plan, especially when he predicted all of this already?

‘So he has a plan in mind?’

He had heard that Un Hui had become the Heir's personal guard. Did the Pope believe that Un Hui would be able to help Cho Ryu Hyang?

‘No, he wouldn't be enough.’

An expert of the harmonious stage was indeed rare and special.

But there are thousands, if not tens of thousands, of ways to kill a human. Even a harmonious expert wouldn't be able to deal with all of those ways.

And the four families were unparalleled experts when it came to murder.

It was very easy for the four families to kill a little boy like Cho Ryu Hyang.

The only reason why they didn't do it was because they were afraid of the consequences of doing so. They were very afraid of the Pope in particular.

"I have no desire to imprison the boy in a safe place to let him grow. It's not like I can always be there to protect him."

".....!"

"You see, the martial world has far more dangerous things than what the four families can cook up. It would be good for Cho Ryu Hyang to experience a taste of what that would be like before going out to the martial world."

"Then....."

Sunwu Jo Duk's eyes got filled with admiration. Lions were said to push off their own kin down cliffs on purpose.

Was this not the best way to grow someone up to become the strongest lion? Gongson Chun Gi must be thinking that exact thing.

“I’m actually thankful to the boys over at the four families. They’re basically solving all my problems at my stead. They’re really busy about it, too. That really shouldn’t be easy for them, especially at that age.”

Gongson Chun Gi showed a toothy grin.

“But it wouldn’t be that easy to kill my disciple.”

“Aren’t you trusting Un Hui too much? The power of the four families isn’t something a single harmonious expert can handle.”

Gongson Chun Gi simply smirked.

“You think I trust Un Hui?”

“You mean, there’s someone else other than him?”

The Heir didn’t even get started on learning martial arts yet. The boy didn’t have any way of fending off the four families.

“Unless I myself intervene, there are very few people in this world who can manage to kill that boy.”

“.....!”

“He’s really quite something, that boy. So you pay attention from now, too. He’ll be the first one in a hundred years to show the world what the Moon Edge Blade Technique is really like.”

Crunch–

The fruit in his mouth truly was sweet. He decided not to tell Sunwu Jo Duk about the boy’s skill with formations. After all, the man was already rendered speechless.

Gongson Chun Gi.

The one he trusted the most was not Un Hui, nor was it the bodyguards that would be guarding them from the dark.

Cho Ryu Hyang.

He was trusting the boy himself.

“So you should just go ahead and try your best to help out the four families, too. It might be actually possible to kill the boy if you used poison, actually.”

Gongson Chun Gi lightly tapped on Sunwu Jo Duk’s shoulder as he chewed on the fruit. He then walked past the man, and walked to where his disciple was waiting for him.

Sunwu Jo Duk just stared at the Pope dumbly.

“My name would be Cho Mu Ryung.”

Gongson Chun Gi became a little concerned when he saw Cho Ryu Hyang’s father introduce himself. He was about to act all high and mighty as usual, but the man’s identity troubled him.

It was hard for him to treat the man like whatever, especially because the man was an outsider, and his disciple’s father at that. But his position made it so that it was pretty awkward to give the man a proper introduction as an equal.

After all, he was the representation of God, the master of the Heavenly Demon Church.

‘This is troublesome, isn’t it? What did teach do in this situation?’

His eyes met Cho Ryu Hyang’s at that moment.

The boy’s eyes were filled with worry. Gongson Chun Gi felt how agitated his disciple was from that gaze alone, and smirked. He introduced himself to the father.

“This one is called Gongson Chun Gi.”

Cho Ryu Hyang's worries got blown away at that moment. It seemed that his teacher understood what he was trying to say.

Cho Mu Ryung nodded after receiving the Pope's introduction. His first impression of the Pope was better than he had expected.

'I had heard that the Pope was a demon that massacred thousands of people with a smile on his face.....'

Rumors weren't meant to be trusted, after all. The person in front of him seemed kind, and easygoing. The Pope seemed to be the exact opposite of what the rumors had said.

"Let's sit down and then talk."

When Gongson Chun Gi offered him a sit, everyone in the room sat down around the round table in a triangular formation.

Cho Ryu Hyang took his seat, and moved it closer to his father. Gongson Chun Gi found that to be quite heartwarming.

[Don't worry. I'm not going to eat your father or anything.]

Cho Ryu Hyang tried to say something in retaliation when he heard that, but couldn't, because of his father. He just puffed up his cheeks and stayed quiet.

"Thank you for taking care of my son."

Gongson Chun Gi stopped smiling, and nodded.

“He’s quite talented. It’s a very rare thing for the church to take in an outsider as the Heir. This boy is talented enough for me to do that. You really have raised quite something.”

There’s no one who wouldn’t get happy when his child gets praised. Especially when the person who was praising the child was the strongest man in the world.

Cho My Ryung was unable to maintain a straight face when he heard such a thing. Gongson Chun Gi’s words were straightforward, and contained honesty.

Right then, Gongson Chun Gi opened his mouth.

“Would you like to tell me anything you have against the church, if you have any? I would like to clear up any misunderstandings you might have. The church isn’t as evil as you might think.”

“Mm.....”

Cho Mu Ryung became a little troubled when the man got on topic straight away. He was going to get to it after some time, but then Gongson Chun Gi brought it up without having him think about it.

Gongson Chun Gi quickly opened his mouth while Cho Mu Ryung tried to think of an answer.

“This is actually a top secret info of the church, but since you have close ties with the church, I’ll tell you. The church is trying to expand into the Sichuan territory. We must try to send large amount of materials to Sichuan because of this. To think you would be managing a trading company like this, this really must be fate.”

Cho Mu Ryung became confused. Move materials to Sichuan? Why?

“Would you tell me what you mean by expanding into Sichuan?”

“Isn’t it obvious? The church is trying to expand its influence into Sichuan.”

Cho Mu Ryung became extremely surprised when he heard this.

“But..... Isn’t Sichuan heavily influenced by the Alliance?”

Gongson Chun Gi grinned when he heard Cho Mu Ryung.

“You think the Alliance can stop us?”

“.....”

Truthfully speaking, the Alliance couldn't. That was already proven once.

“Even the entirety of the Alliance couldn't take on the church. You think the people in Sichuan can stop us?”

Cho Mu Ryung couldn't say anything. There were about four thousand people in Sichuan.

But the thing was, most of the major forces within the Alliance were stationed there. This was different from the fight in the Qilian mountains. The church was going to destroy the Alliance's main base.

Cho Mu Ryung's mind became chaotic due to the overwhelming news he just heard. Right then, Gongson Chun Gi said another shocking thing that basically overwhelmed him even more.

“It would be good if you would help the church when we expand into Sichuan. After all, your company is stationed in Sichuan, and we have a very special relationship with each other now, do we not?”

“Eeh?”

Cho Mu Ryung couldn't say anything when Gongson Chun Gi said that about their relationship. Gongson Chun Gi simply smiled, and took out the document he prepared in advance.

“I hope that you would take care of all the materials we would have to send to Sichuan. This document contains all the materials we have to transfer, as well as the rewards you will receive.”

Cho Ryu Hyang realized something when he saw the document in Gongson Chun Gi's hands.

‘He had expected things to turn out like this from the start.’

His teacher had expected how his father would react, and what he would think from the very start of the conversation.

‘Father.....’

Cho Mu Ryung looked at the document, then back at Gongson Chun Gi several times over with a dumb face. Gongson Chun Gi faintly smiled, and opened his mouth.

“What is it? Is the reward not good enough for you?”

“.....”

There was no way it wasn't good enough. Actually, the amount of money Cho Mu Ryung would be receiving was so great, he wasn't sure what to do with himself.

But Cho Mu Ryung didn't give an answer to Gongson Chun Gi. Truly, something like this would only come once in a lifetime.

That was why he had to think. Cho Mu Ryung thought as much as he could while trying to keep a straight face. The document, or rather, the contract, had no errors in it.

And the benefits he would get from this was too good. He would be a fool not to take this job.

‘I really don’t know if I’m doing the right thing here.’

Taking this job would mean that he would be turning his back to the people of the Alliance located in Sichuan.

But he didn’t think much there. Right now, the world was in the hands of the Heavenly Demon Church. All of the organizations in the world right now were struggling to become allies with the Heavenly Demon Church, even.

Thinking about how long the Heavenly Demon Church would be a major power in the martial world was something he would consider later.

‘It’s not like I had much of a choice from the start, anyway.’

His son was already a major figure in the church from the start, wasn’t he? Cho Mu Ryung didn’t even have to think about this.

Cho Mu Ryung stamped the document, all the while thinking of

his relationship with the church.

Like this, the church's expansion into the mainland was decided.



Chapter 69. The Man From The Palace

It rained that day. It signified that it was the last day of summer.

Someone got off of a carriage in the road and soaked himself in the rain.

It was a man in a black robe. He stared forward with an extremely sad expression.

There was a funeral in front of him. The man looked at it for a moment, then quietly opened his mouth.

“Is this teacher Jo Gi Chun’s house?”

“Yes.”

The man didn’t say anything for a moment, then opened his mouth again.

“I’ll go in alone.”

“.....Yes sir.”

The bodyguard thought for a moment, then gave the man permission to enter alone. The man entered the house with a serious face.

“You must be Jo Min Gyu, am I correct?”

“Y, yes. But.....”

“It must’ve been hard for you. I’m here now, so you don’t have to worry anymore.”

“.....What?”

The man who seemed to be the head of the house, Jo Gi Chun’s eldest son, Jo Min Gyu, looked at the young man in front of him with a confused expression.

A man who seemed to be at least ten years younger than him just grabbed his hand and told him to not worry.

It was surprising, but since all kinds of things happen in a funeral, he just let it pass.

“Jo Gi Chun truly was an amazing man.”

“Right.....”

Jo Min Gyu made a complicated face when he heard the young man’s words.

He didn't know what his father did outside, but he knew for sure that his father never took care of the family.

It wasn't that his father never earned money.

When he thought about it, they weren't that lacking in money. Their life might've been a little hard, but it wasn't to the point of them actually lacking in money or anything.

But that was it. His father just came to see his family once every few years.

Jo Min Gyu only felt more and more complicated whenever he saw a packet of money come to his house every month.

It was almost as if the packet of money was the substitute for his father.

In other words, Jo Gi Chun, his father, never did his job as a father.

‘That damn mathematics.....’

Whenever he thought of that, he automatically would ground his teeth in anger.

His father, Jo Gi Chun, devoted his life to that useless thing called mathematics.

That was why he never paid attention to his own family.

That was why he always felt a little heavy in his heart whenever people complimented his father.

Just how much did he hate his father?

When he first heard that his father died a few days ago, he didn't get very sad. No, he thought he wasn't sad.

But when he saw his father's corpse lying down in the coffin, something just shot up from his heart.

He cried without knowing in front of his father's coffin.

He realized for the first time that he could cry like this. His mother must've felt the same.

While the whole family was drowning in sadness, the man in black, who handed them Jo Gi Chun's corpse, took out something from his clothes and handed it to them.

"This is a small gift from the church. We hope this helps."

The martial artist who brought his father's corpse. He was handing them a small packet.

It seemed to be a packet of money. Jo Min Gyu didn't expect much from it though.

That was why he didn't open it until the martial artist left. Without even knowing about what was inside the packet.....

‘One thousand gold coins.’

There was a check for one thousand gold coins inside the packet.

A family of four could live well for an entire year off of a single gold coin. There was a thousand of it. Wasn't this too much money?

Just what was father doing outside? Wasn't he just a mathematician? Jo Min Gyu began to feel even more complicated than before.

The young man who had been holding onto his hand let go slowly and lit the incense sticks in front of him. He was grieving for Jo Gi Chun.

“In mathematics alone, he was like my teacher. Studying mathematics together in the palace was probably one of the greatest moments in my life.How regrettable. If he had waited a little longer, he would've witnessed me creating a better world for all of us..... To think he'd leave like this.....”

The man's sobbing just grew louder and soon turned into a full fledged cry of pain.

“Kuh, uaaaa!”

The young man soon started to beat the ground with a sorrowful cry.



Jo Min Gyu, the eldest son of Jo Gi Chun, felt troubled when he saw this.

The man who seemed fine just a moment ago started to cry extremely sorrowfully.

He was also muttering something under his breath, but it was hard to tell just what he was saying.

‘Just what did father do outside?’

Jo Min Gyu’s face just kept on getting more and complicated, as he realized that he was only learning more about his father after death.

The young man cried for quite a long time. He lifted his head and looked at Jo Min Gyu with swollen eyes.

Jo Min Gyu felt quite guilty when he saw the young man covered in snot and tears.

He became ashamed at himself because of the young man who grieved more than he ever did for his father.

“.....Who was it?”

The young man’s voice was cracked, due to crying so much.

“What?”

The young man opened his mouth again when he realized that Jo Min Gyu didn’t understand him properly.

“Do you know who made teacher like this?”

“I, I don’t.”

Come to think of it, the man who handed over the corpse said something about where he came from, but he couldn’t remember too clearly.

At the time, Jo Min Gyu was in too much of a shock to take in anything.

Although his father never did anything for the family, the existence of a father itself had always given Jo Min Gyu something to rely on.

“Other than the fact that it was a martial artist..... I can’t really remember.”

“Martial artist!!”

The young man shouted out loudly when he heard Jo Min Gyu’s answer. He then ground his teeth in pure rage. He beat the ground again out of frustration.

“I had told him multiple times to not get involved with those barbaric scum, yet he.....”

He lost the person he respected most to barbarians. That was what the young man thought.

After crying for quite some time, the young man stood back up with his face covered in snot and tears and grabbed onto Jo Min Gyu's hand.

“Don't worry! I'll take care of everything.”

“Ah..... sure.”

The man, as if he just remembered something, clumsily took out something from his robe and handed it to Jo Min Gyu.

“This is a gift from me. Please, cheer up!”

When Jo Min Gyu took the gift from the young man, the man walked to everyone in the funeral grounds and personally told them to cheer up, then cried again and left.

After looking at the young man leave dumbly, the family remembered the gift in their hand, and opened it.

Their eyes widened once more. The gift contained a check inside it, and it was a check of a hundred gold coins.

“Mother..... Just what did father do?”

“I don’t know.....”

Even the family did not know. Just what did Jo Gi Chun do?

The only thing they knew about Jo Gi Chun was the fact that the man loved mathematics and devoted his entire life to it.

“Are you done?”

“Yes. I’ve finished.”

The bodyguard who had been waiting outside led the young man into the carriage and stepped in the carriage with the man. The carriage began to move.

They were moving to the palace.

“I must see the Great General when we get back.”

When the young man opened his mouth with a voice of determination like this, the bodyguard’s eyes brightened.

“You’ve made your mind?”

The young man avoided the bodyguard’s eyes as he nodded.

“Yes. I’m just ashamed that I made everyone wait so long.”

“No. The general will be very happy. Everything is complete now that you are joining.”

The bodyguard was unable to suppress his joy.

He quickly directed the driver to head to the Great General’s headquarters. As he did this, he thought this in his head.

‘Be elated, Great General! Everything you have wanted for this mission is now within your hands!’

The young man, who wasn’t known too well in the world, was actually an extremely powerful existence.

“So you have made up your mind?”

The Great General, Chuk Gye Guang (戚繼光), ran outside with bare feet to greet the young man.

The young man turned his head in embarrassment when he saw the General to this and spoke.

“Forgive me for making you wait this long.”

“It’s nothing. I’m just thankful that you are on board with my plan.”

The Great General laughed loudly. It was finally time for him to proceed with his plans.

The man in front of the General was his trump card.

This man’s talent wasn’t known to the world, but his intelligence rivaled even that of the prime minister himself.

‘No, it’s even greater.’

The man just wasn’t known to the world, as he devoted all his time into an useless thing such as formations.

The General liked the man even more because of that.

He liked how the young man was able to focus on his work without minding what the rest of the world thought about him.

And the young man even had talent. Just how amazing was this man?

It was very hard for someone to not become arrogant of his intelligence and use it for evil ways in this age.

‘Ju Ho Yu’ was this young man’s name.

“The greatest mathematician in the world” was the young man’s title.

“We must use this chance to sweep away all those damned martial artists in one go.”

At first, Ju Ho Yu hesitated a little when he heard of the Great General’s plan. The plan just seemed too dangerous and violent.

But even Ju Ho Yu knew how dangerous these martial artists were to the imperial palace. They needed a method to control these people.

“I’ll do my best.”

The Great General smiled.

He thought that him attaining this young man was akin to Liu Bei attaining Zhuge Liang in the past.

“I’ll go get the king’s permission to strike the martial artists so just wait.”

“Yes sir.”

When the Great General went back inside to dress up in order to meet the king, Ju Ho Yu rubbed his swollen eyes and sighed.

‘Many people will die from now.’

Ju Ho Yu’s face darkened. He didn’t want people to die or get hurt, but he soon shook his head.

“Martial artists must disappear.”

Right. Martial artists were barbarians who did whatever they wanted just because they had strength.

They were people who didn’t even follow the laws of the nation, and engaged in murder and violence as much as they pleased. They needed to disappear for the people of this nation.

‘Please give me strength, teacher.’

Ju Ho Yu thought of Jo Gi Chun, who would be observing his movements from somewhere in the heavens and steeled his thought.

Jo Gi Chun was the first one to teach him what the word ‘surprise’ was.

Ju Ho Yu had never suspected there would be someone who had

studied mathematics to that degree in the entire world.

It was a new experience for him, and it gave him the most joy he had experienced in his entire life.

But that person died a meaningless death. He had wanted to talk to his teacher some time in the future.....

Ju Ho Yu's eyes got filled with sadness once more.

The fact that he would never be able to meet a man who loved mathematics that much brought him great pain.

'I wanted to show him what I had discovered recently.....'

Ju Ho Yu thought of Jo Gi Chun's face in his mind and rubbed his fingers together.

Thinking of all the conversation they had in the past made him sad again.

'I'll take revenge in your stead.'

He would be going up against the martial world itself.....

Like this, the imperial palace began to move into the world of martial arts.

Chapter 70. The Pope Is A Smuggler(?)

Cho Ryu Hyang's father, Cho Mu Ryung, quickly returned home. He was returning to prepare his employees in order to deliver the massive amount of materials the church requested him to take.

If this job proceeds smoothly, Cho Mu Ryung's company would easily become the biggest company in the mainland.

The rewards he would be receiving from Gongson Chun Gi were just that big, Cho Ryu Hyang, too, knew that.

That was why he was staring at Gongson Chun Gi. Gongson Chun Gi felt the boy's gaze on him and opened his mouth as he touched his cup of tea.

“What, do you think we gave your father too much of a reward?”

“Yes.”

The reward for this job was too much as compared to the job itself. Cho Ryu Hyang could easily see that there was a hidden intent within the job itself.

Gongson Chun Gi didn't deny it. He smiled calmly as he kept talking.

“You're right. The reward for this job is too big, but it was worth

it, which was why I spent so much money on your father.”

Gongson Chun Gi looked over to the artificial lake next to him while Cho Ryu Hyang sat there in silence.

“Normally, I would’ve brought the people from your family as soon as possible. That would be the proper thing to do according to the tradition.”

“.....”

Tradition. That word came to Cho Ryu Hyang quite heavily.

“What do you think would happen if an outsider became the Heir of the church? You think everyone’s going to be happy about it? Right now, they’re happy because a Heir has been chosen, but when time passes, they’ll come back to their senses and think strange things. Before that, we must take your family into the church.”

Cho Ryu Hyang nodded. It made sense. The power of the church was actually quite immense; It was so big, in fact, even Cho Ryu Hyang was unable to see its true size.

If that immense strength was used on an outsider like him, there was no question that it would make many of the people of the church angry. Gongson Chun Gi began to laugh loudly.

“But how can something like that be done forcefully? If it’s a

stubborn person like your father as well, if I try to force him into the church, he'll reject us even more. That's why I used my head a little."

Gongson Chun Gi was planning on taking them in by building their trust with various jobs first.

It would take quite a bit of time, but Gongson Chun Gi still decided to use it. That was the most kindness Gongson Chun Gi was able to show to Cho Ryu Hyang's parents.

"Since I would be able to stick my people to them as bodyguards from time to time, it's like catching two birds with one stone."

Cho Ryu Hyang nodded. He knew how much kindness his teacher was showing to his family.

"Anyways, don't worry about the matters regarding your family and the church, after all, I'm thinking as much as I can to integrate them here."

Cho Ryu Hyang decided to follow his teacher's words. But there was still one thing he was curious about.

"I have a reason for calling you out here today, actually."

Cho Ryu Hyang became a little anxious. They were going to go into the topic now. Gongson Chun Gi looked at Cho Ryu Hyang with a playful face.

“You should know, too, but the church will go out into Sichuan in the near future. This will be a big event. Personally, I don’t really like events like this.”

Cho Ryu Hyang silently agreed. Gongson Chun Gi was uninterested in things like conquering China mainland. Actually, he was just too lazy to do it.

A person like that, trying to extend the influence of the church into Sichuan? This didn’t really fit the Pope’s personality.

Gongson Chun Gi began to complain as he brought his teacup to his mouth. It was as if he had been thinking the same thing as Cho Ryu Hyang.

“It’s because we became too big.”

“.....”

“The church is at its biggest size since its creation. We became far bigger than we were in the past. That brought us problems we had never encountered before.”

“What is it?”

If it was a problem of this massive organization, it wouldn’t be a small matter. Gongson Chun Gi paused for a while under Cho Ryu

Hyang's gaze, then put his thumb and index finger together to form a circle.

“It's money.”

“.....What?”

Money problems? The church? When Cho Ryu Hyang stared at Gongson Chun Gi with a confused face, Gongson Chun Gi began nodding slowly as he talked.

“The Popes that came before me did all they could in order to expand their influence to the mainland. There was much sacrifice in the process of this; however, we earned a lot in return. We came back with valuable goods and earned massive amounts of money from the areas we conquered. Other than that.....”

Gongson Chun Gi stopped talking, then looked behind Cho Ryu Hyang and grinned.

“There's the old man who'll explain everything for you.”

When Cho Ryu Hyang turned his head, he could see a thin old man approach them. Cho Ryu Hyang remembered seeing the man at the coronation ceremony.

‘I think they called him Jeon Bak (錢搏: money-grubbing ghost)’

The mysterious old man was one of the eight guardians of the church and managed the financial matters of the church. He held the title of the Fighting Gold General (金鬪算將).

“You called for me, your Holiness?”

“Ah. Let me introduce you first. This old man here’s Jeon Bak. He’ll probably become the person you fear the most in the church.”

Gongson Chun Gi smiled evilly towards Cho Ryu Hyang as he introduced Guardian Jeon.

“He’s really annoying, so be careful.”

“.....Aren’t you supposed to say things like that when the person you are insulting is not around, your Holiness?”

When Guardian Jeon protested with a small pout, Gongson Chun Gi puffed up his chest and spoke loudly.

“What, am I wrong?”

“It’s not really wrong, but you’re supposed to say those kinds of things behind my back.”

“Kekeke, only weaklings do that sort of a thing.”

Guardian Jeon opened his mouth and closed it, then turned towards Cho Ryu Hyang.

“My introductions were quite late. It would be good if you could address me as Guardian Jeon.”

“My name would be Cho Ryu Hyang.”

Jeon Bak smiled when the two finished exchanging greetings with each other.

“I had heard that you were interested in mathematics.”

“Yes.”

“That’s very good. I look forward to the future of the church.”

When Jeon Bak laughed with a proud face, Gongson Chun Gi waved his hands as if he was signalling Jeon Bak to get on with something.

“Enough small talk. Tell him about what’s going on in the church right now.”

Jeon Bak nodded. He immediately began to explain what was going on to Cho Ryu Hyang.

“Till now, the church acted as the bridge between the mainland and the western world and earned much from it. For us, who live on land that cannot even be farmed, this was the best and the only way to earn money. That method alone let us survive till now. But recently we’ve encountered a troubling problem.”

Jeon Bak took out an abacus and put it on the table.

“The church’s military force was always being used up as we fought with the organizations of the mainland. There was never a case where the number of our soldiers exceeded a certain number. But when the current Pope stepped up, the whole situation took a strange turn.”

Jeon Bak calculated something as he agily used his abacus, then stretched out his hand outstretched as he opened his mouth.

“There are too many soldiers that are doing anything. We’ll lose all of our money in five months if this keeps going.”

“Before that happens, we’ll need to go earn some money for ourselves. That’s why we are going out to Sichuan.”

Cho Ryu Hyang’s eyes sparkled only then as if he realized what was going on just now. All the organizations of the martial world operated based on martial might and financial power.

Of course, there were things such as spies and the like but these

always played the support role and weren't really necessary for an organization.

Anyway, the Heavenly Demon Church at the present moment was far too big for its own good. There was no way that their current job alone would be able to support the entire church. The balance within the church had been broken.

“Sichuan, to the church, is akin to the land of hope. As long as we manage to successfully station our soldiers there, the amount of money we would be able to earn would be twice the amount we are earning now.”

“Twice the amount.....”

Cho Ryu Hyang began thinking. He didn't know just how much the church manages to earn every year, but it's an amount of money that allows a massive organization like this operate.

Twice the amount of the current earnings was something that Cho Ryu Hyang couldn't even fathom. He couldn't imagine just how the church was managing to earn that much money. Jeon Bak realized what Cho Ryu Hyang was thinking and smiled.

“The church took the goods of the mainland with some difficult methods over to the west and sold it there. We did the same for the goods from the western world. If we manage to take control of Sichuan, we won't need to go through difficult operations which would allow us to spend less than we are now. Other than that, we would be able to aim for something even bigger.”

Something bigger? When Cho Ryu Hyang made a confused face, Jeon Bak smiled mischievously and looked at the Pope. He was asking if it was alright to tell Cho Ryu Hyang. Gongson Chun Gi nodded and decided to tell Cho Ryu Hyang himself.

“It’s salt.”

“.....!”

Salt? Wasn’t that something that the nation strictly forbid merchants from selling?

“Till recently, this old man here got together with other old men and worked quite a bit. Thanks to them, we were able to attain some salt from Xizhang (西藏: Tibet).”

Cho Ryu Hyang’s mouth widened. The scale of this operation was far bigger than he previously thought.

“Smuggling?”

“Yeah. Well, I guess it’s a little bigger than that.”

It was something that the Heavenly Demon Church was doing. There was no question that it would be a big operation.

“It’s the way to earn the most money as possible in the current

world. You must know as well, but salt is worth its weight in gold.”

Right. Salt that was regulated by the nation itself was extremely valuable. As a necessary commodity, it was far too expensive.

The imperial palace was earning most of its money from salt, in fact.

“We worked our asses off to get salt. It would be a shame if we were unable to sell it.”

Cho Ryu Hyang nodded. Expansion into Sichuan was something that the church needed to do. Right then, Jeon Bak opened his mouth.

“This isn’t a simple thing though. It’s not like we can sell salt right away if we bring it to Sichuan. That’s because salt isn’t something that can be sold out in broad daylight. Because of that, we must first create a market where we can sell such a thing.”

Jeon Bak began to calculate with the abacus once more as he continued talking.

“In order to do that, we must take over more than half of Sichuan. Under five months at that.”

Gongson Chun Gi scratched his neck as he opened his mouth.

“It wouldn’t be easy, but it has to be done.”

“So it’s that serious of a problem.”

“Yes. It’s mostly due to a person in the church who likes to spend too much.”

When Jeon Bak glared at Gongson Chun Gi with eyes like a snake, Gongson Chun Gi flinched and turned away. The one who had been spending as much money as he liked was him after all.

“Hum, hum. Well, with this, we’ll be able to take care of all our problems.”

Gongson Chun Gi made this all sound very easy, but Cho Ryu Hyang didn’t really think this was going to be easy.

‘There are three things I’m afraid of, disregarding all the unforeseen variables that could affect this mission.’

The first thing was that the church was trying out something entirely new, and the second thing was that the martial artists of Sichuan wouldn’t just stand there and watch their home get taken from them.

‘And.....’

The last thing was what worried Cho Ryu Hyang the most. It was

the reason why no one sold any salt despite knowing that it would make them a huge amount of money.

‘Would the imperial palace just stand there and watch?’

The imperial palace was incredibly sensitive when it came to matters regarding salt. There were always salt being traded in the mainland but only the likes of small merchants did it.

If something as big as the Heavenly Demon Church began to sell salt like this, there was no way the imperial palace wouldn't notice. That worried Cho Ryu Hyang the most.

‘He should have a plan.....’

There was no way Gongson Chun Gi failed to think of the three things that he thought of just now. There was also no way that Gongson Chun Gi failed to put up a plan to deal with these problems.

Did he sense Cho Ryu Hyang's worries? Gongson Chun Gi grinned, and opened his mouth.

“Don't take the church too lightly. The power of the church is much greater than you might think.”

Cho Ryu Hyang nodded. Like Gongson Chun Gi said, the power of the church was far greater than Cho Ryu Hyang had initially imagined it to be and that power was now moving towards

Sichuan.



Chapter 71. Cho Ryu Hyang Fights A Harmonious Expert

Un Hui observed his young master carefully from the darkness. For the last few days, he had observed Cho Ryu Hyang as carefully as possible. However, frustration was the only thing that could be seen on his face.

‘What is it?’

His young master had fainted a few days ago, and when his young master woke up, something had changed.

He couldn’t say exactly what had changed, but Un Hui was definitely able to feel that something was different.

‘There’s something that I’m unable to notice?’

A harmonious expert’s senses far exceeded those of normal humans. Even with senses like those, Un Hui was unable to see what had changed within Cho Ryu Hyang. That made him feel even more suspicious.

Un Hui looked over his young master once more with a careful gaze. He didn’t know exactly what this change that overcame his young master was, but he felt that it was incredibly important.

He couldn’t have been more correct.

‘Interesting.’

Cho Ryu Hyang looked over his body once, and smiled.

The ‘Ryun’ of the Moon Edge Blade Technique.

Once he figured out everything about it, he could feel total control over his body. He could even see how each cell of his body responded actively even to small movements.

It was unfamiliar at first, much like how walking is to a baby, but as time passed, he grew accustomed to it. At this point, he was able to feel the changes in his body without feeling unrest.

‘And.....’

The biggest change that he went through wasn’t related to his body. Cho Ryu Hyang slowly closed his eyes and walked. Strangely, even when his vision was completely gone, he could still walk confidently.

‘This really is interesting.’

Everything around him was vividly drawn out in his mind. He could make out every single one of the little pebbles on the

sidewalk. Thanks to this, he didn't have any problems at all walking with his eyes closed.

The biggest obstacle in the Moon Edge Blade Technique, "Ryun". Once he understood what "Ryun" was, he was able to earn something very special. He was able to earn this 'area' around him.

'About twenty steps.....'

The area reached only up to twenty of Cho Ryu Hyang's footsteps. But even so, he could 'see' everything within that area even without proper eyesight.

On the way of going back to his living quarters after saying farewell to his teacher, Cho Ryu Hyang stopped. He opened his eyes and looked forward.

'There's something there.'

At the very edge of his 'area'. There was something there. His godly eyes activated instantly, and something strange came up in Cho Ryu Hyang's eyes.

'A person?'

It seemed that Un Hui had also realized that there was someone hiding in front of Cho Ryu Hyang.

He could see Un Hui moving forward at an extreme speed. At that moment, he could hear what his teacher had said just moments ago.

[You'll have a pretty interesting present waiting for you when you get back.]

When Cho Ryu Hyang thought of that playful voice, he quickly raised his hands.

“It's fine. He's a guest.”

Cho Ryu Hyang was confident that the man crouching in front of his living quarters was the present that his teacher had talked about.

His prediction was correct. Un Hui made a complicated face as he stayed hidden in the shadows.

‘Again?’

He has this feeling every time he is near his master, but his master really had a talent for finding people who were hiding. Something like this usually hurt the pride of the person hiding.

Cho Ryu Hyang walked forward, and looked at the man who was looking at him while crouching.

‘Seventy.....’

When he looked over with his vision, the man turned out to have a talent value of seventy. This was truly a larger number than he had expected.

‘Looks like there are only talented people in the church.’

Come to think of it, everyone he met so far exceeded the number seventy.

He didn’t know if the church was just this powerful or if just every person he was meeting was just this talented, but seeing how the church attained so many talents just proved that it was the greatest power at the moment in the world.

Was it because his teacher was extremely talented? It seemed like multiple talented people just sprang up in the vicinity of the Pope.

While Cho Ryu Hyang was thinking this, the man who had been crouching stood up.

“I was waiting for you.”

Cho Ryu Hyang looked at the young man in front of him with a confused face.

‘Who is he?’

He was curious of this man who dared to talk like this in front of the Heir of the church. Just when he was about to ask the man who he was, the man opened his mouth first.

“I made a bet with the Pope. If I beat you, I’d be able to take your place as the Pope; however, if I lost, I’d have to be your underling.”

“.....”

Cho Ryu Hyang’s lips twitched without him even realizing it. He could now realize what Gongson Chun Gi was going for here. After surveying the young man for a bit, Cho Ryu Hyang became curious.

‘This is.....’

This didn’t feel normal. After thinking for a bit, he turned to Un Hui for a second, then back to the young man. He carefully opened his mouth.

“Harmonious expert?”

The young man nodded; Cho Ryu Hyang readjusted his glasses when he saw the man do this. He thought of his teacher laughing in the background, then quietly complained to himself in his mind.

‘What a fun little prank you’ve played on me.’

He didn't know who this man in front of him was, but there was one thing he was sure of.

He had to take down a Harmonious expert, a person who exceeded the limits of the human body.

How should he fight someone like this? While Cho Ryu Hyang was thinking, the young man opened his mouth.

“Can we start?”

Cho Ryu Hyang touched his glasses and opened his mouth.

“Can I ask you something before we start?”

“Sure.”

“What is your name?”

“My name? I'm No Jin Nyung.”

Who?

Cho Ryu Hyang repressed himself from saying that question out loud, and made a confused face.

‘What the heck?’

The man in front of him should have a pretty high position within the church since he was able to make a bet with the Pope himself, though Cho Ryu Hyang was unable to figure out what job the man had.

“I want to be the Pope. That’s why I’ll take you down.”

“.....”

Cho Ryu Hyang felt his head cool. He could feel honesty in No Jin Nyung’s voice.

‘He’s not joking.’

Cho Ryu Hyang, who had been looking at this whole thing in a playful manner, reflected back on himself. To a person like this, anything close to jokes never work.

Once he realized this, Cho Ryu Hyang gave up on actually fighting the man. He might’ve achieved “Ryun”, but it didn’t mean that he was invincible just yet.

He wasn’t dumb enough to try and go head on against a Harmonious expert.

Instead, Cho Ryu Hyang decided to use his secret weapon. He was

more confident in this area of fighting after all.

After looking over the whole area calmly, Cho Ryu Hyang faintly smiled and opened his mouth.

“I’m ready.”

“Can I go, then?”

Cho Ryu Hyang nodded. At that moment, No Jin Nyung jumped forward with extreme speed.

Formations were truly strange things.

As long as the creator was able to set a certain pattern to the area surrounding him, he could create an artificial space with a small amount of resources.

Of course, this only applied to experts of formation-making.

‘He’s coming.’

To be truthful, Cho Ryu Hyang had moved even before No Jin Nyung. There was no way he could act faster than a Harmonious expert like No Jin Nyung.

But just about the time when he started to move towards his target, he had to reset everything that he had planned prior to the battle.

‘Danger!’

Pan–!

Cho Ryu Hyang barely dodged No Jin Nyung’s strike, rolled on the floor, then stood back up with a very complicated face.

“Eh? You dodged that?”

“.....”

It seemed a harmonious expert was much stronger than he had initially thought.

‘This is too much.’

He had calculated No Jin Nyung’s speed based off Un Hui’s usual speed. But wasn’t this speed displayed by No Jin Nyung much faster than what he had predicted? Un Hui never moved at such speeds.

‘So he never went all out.’

Un Hui was a Harmonious expert. Based on numbers alone, he was stronger than No Jin Nyung. That just went to show that Un Hui never went all-out before.

Cho Ryu Hyang bit his lip. Unlike Un Hui, No Jin Nyung really was going all out.

There would obviously be a major speed difference between the two. Just dodging that first strike was a miracle in itself.

What should he do, then? Cho Ryu Hyang quickly made his decision when he saw that his opponent was about to make his move.

‘Moon Edge Blade Technique.’

Would it work against a Harmonious expert? He still was unskilled at controlling it..... Cho Ryu Hyang shook off all the insecurities he was going through, and breathed a little.

No Jin Nyung moved at this moment. Cho Ryu Hyang pushed his senses as much as possible and jumped sideways.

‘A kick from below.....’

Strangely enough, he could see the opponent’s movements extremely clearly. But he wasn’t able to react to it fast enough.

With the Moon Edge Blade Technique, he was able to see but not react. Cho Ryu Hyang could only stare at No Jin Nyung's fee that drove itself straight into his abdomen.

Bam—!



Cho Ryu Hyang flew backwards with a sound that resembled an explosion.

Craack—!

A sound of branches and stones hitting Cho Ryu Hyang's body could be heard. Un Hui, who was distanced a little far from both of them, made a dazed face for a moment.

No Jin Nyung's kick was too fast even for him.

“You.....”

Un Hui came out of hiding and ground his teeth. Even if this whole thing was a bet, they were dealing with his master here. His master was on the brink of death, thanks to a kick from No Jin Nyung.

No, Un Hui thought his master was dead. The kick from before was a serious strike from a Harmonious expert even most normal experts would die from such a kick.

But his master was just a child, wasn't he? There was no way that his master was alive. When Un Hui thought this much, killing intent just started to smolder out of his body.

“Eh? Ehh?”

The moment when No Jin Nyung's eyes widened from surprise at seeing Un Hui.

“I..... I'm f, fine.”

When Un Hui heard Cho Ryu Hyang's thin voice, his figure stretched out like a rubber band and instantly appeared next to Cho Ryu Hyang.

“Are you really all right?”

Cho Ryu Hyang nodded, then smiled subconsciously.

“I’m fine.”

“.....”

Fine? No way. What was up with that massive sound just a moment ago, then? Un Hui couldn’t bring himself to say these questions.

That was because his master was just sitting there, covered in dirt, smiling like an idiot.

‘How’s he..... fine?’

Cho Ryu Hyang stood back up under the confused gaze of Un Hui.

“Hup.”

After standing back up, Cho Ryu Hyang dusted himself off a little, then looked back at No Jin Nyung. His eyes were full of confidence that weren’t there just a moment ago.

“Let’s start again.”

No Jin Nyung glanced at Un Hui, then nodded. Un Hui appearing out of nowhere discomfited him a bit, but it didn't look like the man was going to interfere.

Actually what worried him the most was Cho Ryu Hyang. The boy somehow seemed fine after being blown off by his kick.

‘I must’ve just grazed him or something.’

It looked like he subconsciously controlled his strength because he didn't want to kill the boy. Un Hui began to collect strength in his legs again while thinking that.

Cho Ryu Hyang just smiled.

Chapter 72. Cho Ryu Hyang's Trump Card

Pain is a relative thing.

Just like how everyone in the world has a different amount of patience, the amount of pain tolerance everyone has is also different. There is no set amount of pain that everyone can tolerate.

‘The world is unfair.’

Cho Ryu Hyang stood up and thought of a single sentence he read from the Moon Edge Blade Technique. Yes, the sentence was correct.

The world was unfair. Most people die when they allow even a single hit on themselves from a Harmonious expert. They died without even being given the time to feel pain.

Crack–

Cho Ryu Hyang straightened his back once and smiled.

‘But the Moon Edge Blade Technique isn’t normal.’

Ak Jung Pae.

Cho Ryu Hyang could just see how great this man was now. What

Cho Ryu Hyang used just now was the technique that came right after Ryun.

‘Jia (鉀: Armor)’

According to its description, the technique turns his body into something that resembles an armor.

The Moon Edge Blade Technique was something that changed the balance of the entire world in the past. That’s why Cho Ryu Hyang had high expectations for it. He believed that he’d be able to take the attack of a Harmonious expert without even feeling a thing.

But when he took a hit from No Jin Nyung.

‘Mm?’

Cho Ryu Hyang realized that something was terribly wrong. His body was going through intense pain; it was enough to prevent him from even thinking anything.

He couldn’t even scream under the pain that seemed to squeeze all his muscles into tiny pieces.

‘I thought I’d die.’

Right. He genuinely thought he’d die here, but he didn’t. The

pain was soon masked by a strange new 'feeling' he never felt before.

Cho Ryu Hyang smiled faintly as he touched his glasses.

'I'll have to try it one more time.'

He wanted to know more about the strange feeling he felt just a moment ago. When he thought this much, he hesitated a bit.

He realized that in order to confirm what that feeling was, he'd have to take on that terrifying blow again.

Cho Ryu Hyang became very concerned. The pain he just felt now wasn't something he could ever be able to endure.

A cold sweat ran down his back. Wasn't that pain something he never wanted to experience ever again?

'There's no choice.'

Right. No Jin Nyung was already looking at him with a focused face. It was too late to even try to dodge his attack.

Cho Ryu Hyang looked around with a bitter face. He memorized his surroundings as fast as he could and organized his thoughts.

‘At least one hit.’

No matter how much he wanted to dodge, he had to take a hit. He had to endure that terrible pain.

‘But as long as I don’t faint, I’ll win.’

It was just one hit. One hit and he would win. Cho Ryu Hyang bit his lips and steeled his heart.

At that point, No Jin Nyung was thinking something similar to Cho Ryu Hyang.

‘I’ll end this in one hit.’

This would be the simplest way to do it. It wasn’t hard. He regretted the fact that he might kill the child, but he couldn’t afford to restrain himself.

He was going to go all out. No Jin Nyung took a deep breath. Then, a clear black energy began to flow from his body.

It was a heavy yet arrogant energy. It had a presence that seemed to suppress everything around it.

Kugugugu–!

The ground shook faintly. Un Hui got confused for a second when he saw it, he suddenly shouted out in surprise.

“Could that be the Heavenly Demon Technique (天魔神功)?”

No Jin Nyung looked towards Un Hui and blinked several times. He was surprised that Un Hui recognized his technique. Un Hui, who realized what No Jin Nyung was thinking, beame worried.

The Heavenly Dmeon Technique was practiced by the first Pope of the church, the Heavenly Demon Hong Sunwon.

The technique that was said to have been created by that man was the Heavenly Demon Technique. As this was the technique that allowed the man to change the world itself, it was definitely the greatest technique seen so far in the world.

‘But it’s incomplete.....’

The complete Heavenly Demon Technique did not exist. It was because the Pope that came after Hong Sunwon failed to take in the technique completely.

There was no one who managed to complete the technique after the Heavenly Demon himself. Every one of the Popes in the past tried, but they failed to do so.

The Shura Environment, the technique that many of the Popes used, was the technique derived from the destructive aspect of the

Heavenly Demon Technique.

The Heavenly Demon Technique passed down at present day was just a fraction of the whole. But that man managed to become a Harmonious expert with an incomplete technique.

‘This is dangerous.’

He had to stop them. Countless warnings were going on in his head. Because of this, he had to stop himself from moving multiple times, but he could only watch Cho Ryu Hyang as he ground his teeth.

‘Shit.’

Cho Ryu Hyang was currently trembling violently as he looked at No Jin Nyung’s oppressive force, but not once did he stray his eyes away from his enemy.

He was just staring at No Jin Nyung quietly.

‘He’s aiming for something.’

Un Hui was very concerned. He could only save the heir if he acted now. This definitely wasn’t something that Cho Ryu Hyang could take on alone.

Even an incomplete technique unleashed by a Harmonious expert

would be incredibly powerful. No, since it was an incomplete technique, Un Hui was unsure how much power it would contain.

Right then, No Jin Nyung gathered all the energy he was emitting into his leg. At the same time.

Kuum–!

No Jin Nyung stepped on the ground with great force. The force he exerted on the ground was so great, that the ground started to crack apart like turtle shells.

Krrr–!

As Cho Ryu Hyang tried to regain balance from the shockwaves in the ground, No Jin Nyung made his move. Un Hui, who saw this, became extremely nervous.

It still wasn't too late to save Cho Ryu Hyang. This was his final chance. He had to make a choice here.

But in the end, he couldn't move. He just could look at Cho Ryu Hyang with his fists clenched tightly enough to bleed.

‘What is this feeling?’

Un Hui couldn't come back to his senses due to a strange feeling he was experiencing. This was a matter he shouldn't even hesitate

about.

As a bodyguard who puts his master's life before his own, he should quickly go out and sort out the matter in front of him. But he couldn't.

Why? Un Hui, who couldn't figure out what that feeling was, suddenly frowned.

‘This is.....’

It was ‘trust’. His attempt to save his master was obstructed by an emotion known as trust.

‘Am I actually thinking that he would be able to block that?’

It really was a thread of hope that he was putting his trust into. Just how did he imagine that his master could block that blow?

At the moment when Un Hui's face was turning into a frown, No Jin Hyung's kick was heading straight towards Cho Ryu Hyang's body.

Shuaa–!

The air around him screamed violently. This was a kick containing all the power a Harmonious expert could muster.

‘I’ll explode his head.’

This was unavoidable. This attack was just straightforward and honest. That was what made it so strong.

Cho Ryu Hyang reflectively blocked his face with his hands. He was trying to use those arms that resembled sticks to block No Jin Nyung.

No Jin Nyung smirked when he saw Cho Ryu Hyang’s foolish action.

‘Futile resistance.’

That was what No Jin Nyung thought.

Baang–!

With a sound resembling a leather drum exploding, Cho Ryu Hyang was shot off with his body curved like a bow.

Blood fountained in the air, and Cho Ryu Hyang fell on the ground weakly, like a leaf. The fountain of blood froze within Un Hui’s eyes for a moment, just like a picture.

At that moment, Un Hui cursed his decision to not move.

‘I should’ve blocked it.’

He should’ve blocked his master, either by making him faint, or even beating his master up himself. Just how would he face the Pope now? He wouldn’t even have anything to say for himself.

At the point when all sorts of nightmarish events were playing out in his mind, Un Hui widened his eyes. This was the same for No Jin Nyung.

“Eeh?”

Cho Ryu Hyang, whose head should’ve been blown away, was standing up weakly.

“Urk!”

Cho Ryu Hyang seemed to be in an extremely bad condition. It was obvious from the fact that he was constantly throwing up blood with a pale face.

Just when Un Hui was about to move, Cho Ryu Hyang looked at him for a split second, then turned away. Un Hui, who realized what Cho Ryu Hyang was trying to say, frowned.

‘It’s not over?’

Was he interpreting Cho Ryu Hyang’s message correctly? Just

what did his master have to show for himself, especially when he was already in such a state?

While Un Hui was thinking this, Cho Ryu Hyang, who had slowly straightened his back, opened his mouth.

“I win.”

Cho Ryu Hyang showed off his teeth dyed with blood as he tiredly smiled. No Jin Nyung became confused by Cho Ryu Hyang’s statement.

“What do you mean?”

Just what did Cho Ryu Hyang mean, especially when he seemed to be in a half-dead state? Wasn’t the boy going too far with his bluff? That was what No Jin Nyung thought.

Right at that moment, Cho Ryu Hyang lifted his arm and dropped something on the ground.

Tok–

It was a single piece of stone. Just when did the boy pick that up? No, what did that stone have to do with all this?

While No Jin Nyung and Un Hui were thinking the same things together, Cho Ryu Hyang smiled as he spoke.

“Be careful.”

“Of what?”

Vmm–

“Eh?”

With a sound of the air vibrating, No Jin Nyung disappeared from everyone’s sight.

Formations usually had to have a perfect shape. A circle was the most basic shape of a formation and based on that circle, the outside world and the world inside the formation would be split.

In the end, as long as a perfect ‘boundary’ was made, a formation would activate. In the past, Cho Ryu Hyang and Jo Gi Chun researched this ‘boundary’ carefully. ‘When a boundary is made, the inside and the outside will separate.’

They were working on how they could make this basic formation activation requirement simple and easy to do. Wisdom met wisdom, and effort joined with more effort.

And with enough time, one of the results of their research was

being displayed to No Jin Nyung.

“What the hell is this?”

No Jin Nyung became stupefied for a moment. All his senses were shut off briefly, then a bunch of giant, thick iron bars were displayed in front of him.

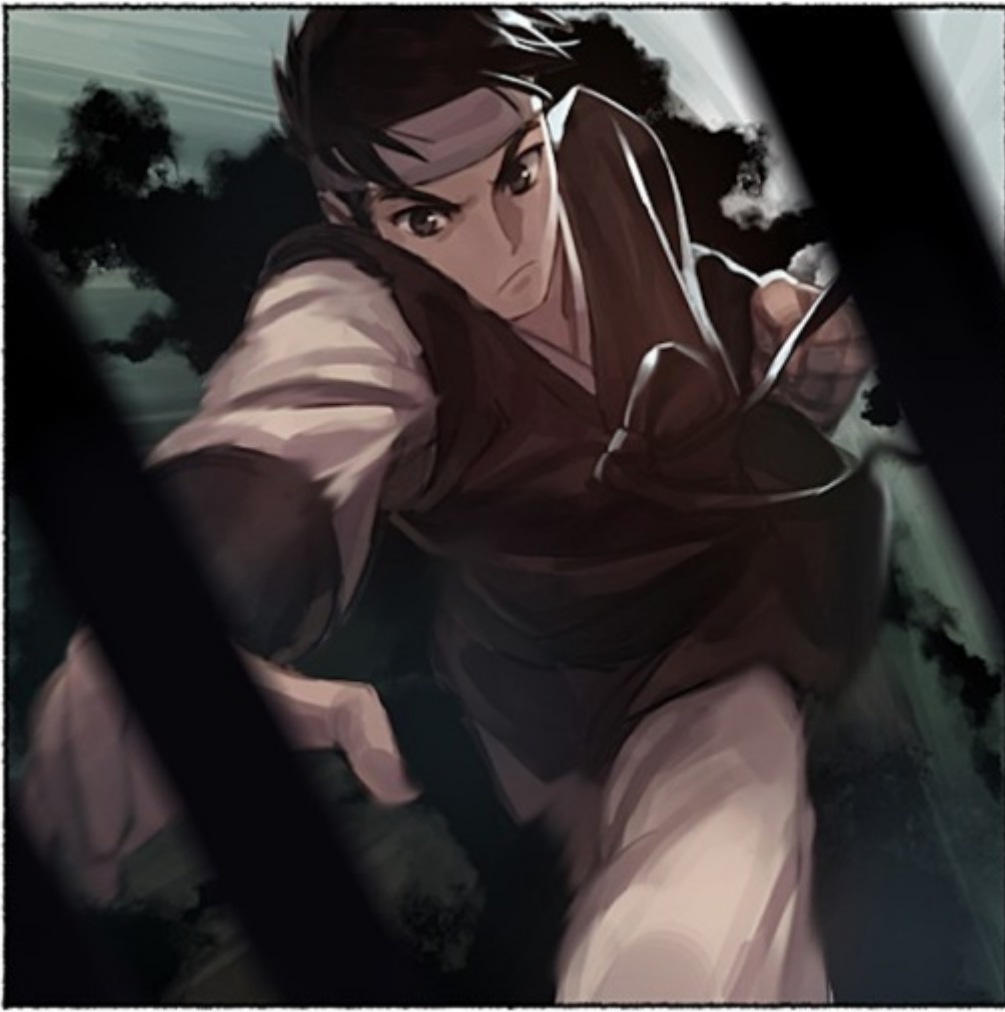
A prison. It was a square prison with about 1 meter in terms of width. A bunch of iron bars caged him inside.

No Jin Nyung blinked a few times in surprise at this nonsensical view in front of him, then carefully extended his head to touch one of the bars. His mouth widened in surprise when he touched one.

“Eh?”

What he just touched actually felt like iron, didn't it? How was this possible? This wasn't some sort of an illusion?

He extended his fist towards the bars with a light jab as he thought this. He would try to break the prison bars before he would do anything else.



Even the strongest piece of iron would be like a toothpick to a Harmonious expert, after all.

Deng–!

No Jin Nyung became surprised at the amount of resistance he felt in his fist. The iron bars were harder than he had thought.

No Jin Nyung made an amused face. He didn't know what had happened, but he knew the heir was responsible for this.

‘This is a battle.’

What this place was, and what it was meant to do did not matter. He just had to get out with the simplest means possible.

And this kind of thought was indeed correct. As long as No Jin Nyung destroyed this formation, victory would be his.

‘Then.....’

This time, he punched the bars after gathering some energy into his fist.

Bang–!

No Jin Nyung licked his lips. Then, he began to laugh without even realizing it.

“This is ridiculous.”

He could only laugh when faced with such an outrageous situation. The iron bars that got hit by his strike were bent.

This was understandable. It was disappointing that a strike meant to destroy only damaged the bars, but he knew that the bars would break if he applied enough force.

But the problem was, the bars would regain its original shape the instant after it was struck. No Jin Nyung laughed by himself for a bit, then took a deep breath.

“Are you seriously trying to have a go with me?”

It looked like he'd have to really go all out. Once he decided to do this, No Jin Nyung's body began to emit a dark, oppressive aura.

Chapter 73. Cho Ryu Hyang Is A Cheater (?)

Gongson Chun Gi was thinking about something carefully with his chin resting on his hand. He opened his mouth.

“Do you know about Zhuge Lian?”

“Zhuge..... Liang?”

“Yeah.”

“If you are talking of Zhuge Liang from the three kingdoms era, there would be no way I wouldn't know of them.”

Jeon Bak restlessly calculated numbers with his abacus, and replied carelessly as he wrote something in the document he was creating. Gongson Chun Gi said something again as he did this.

“Who'd win if we fight?”

It was an idiotic question. But how could Jeon Bak afford to ignore a question from the Pope?

“Of course you'd win. How could a mere scholar ever hope to win against you? A man like that would turn to dust simply from your yawn.”

Jeon Bak's words carried a tone that implied that Gongson Chun

Gi's question was a foolish one. He had responded to Gongson Chun Gi without even looking up from his document.

Gongson Chun Gi looked at Jeon Bak with a gaze full of complicated feelings, then sighed.

“Right? That’s what people would normally think, right?”

“Yes.”

How would Zhuge Liang ever hope to be Gongson Chun Gi’s match?

The full power of the Pope wasn’t publicized in the martial world as of yet, but Gongson Chun Gi had already reached the realm of God. He had reached something no one in the church had ever gotten before.

“Shit, should I fight him again?”

“What?”

When Jeon Bak turned his head from surprise at Gongson Chun Gi’s mutter, Gongson Chun Gi quickly looked away.

“No, I’m still not that prepared. I’ll have to ready myself even more.”

“Just what may you be talking about.....”

Jeon Bak was curious. He thought that the Pope was saying foolish, strange things ever since the Pope came to visit him.

“Don’t worry about me, and just finish up what you’ve been doing. We really have to expand into Sichuan as fast as we can.”

“Yes Sir.”

When Jeon Bak turned his head back to the document, Gongson Chun Gi began to think. A while back, he had gained some things by observing the Moon Edge Blade Technique.

Like he had told Sunwu Jo Duk, what he had gained was tiny, but even that was a great breakthrough for Gongson Chun Gi.

“I won’t go down that easily next time.”

This was one of the few things Gongson Chun Gi enjoyed doing nowadays. For the first time in his life, this old man called Zhuge Liang had shown him what defeat was like.

Gongson Chun Gi wasn’t about to let the old man go that easily. When he thought this much, Gongson Chun Gi’s face filled with a complicated feeling soon had a prideful smile on it.

Un Hui looked in forward with a dumb face. He blinked a few times, looked around a bit, and became confused.

‘He disappeared?’

A person in front of him just disappeared. There wasn’t even a single thing in the area that suggested someone was here previously.

Even Un Hui, who was an expert on tracking people, couldn’t find a trace of No Jin Nyung in the entire area. Just how was this possible?

‘Magic?’

Un Hui thought a little, then shook his head. To a Harmonious expert, who naturally possessed strong mental fortitude, things like [magic](#) just won’t work.

(TL: Looks like magic in King Shura focuses more on the mind... some other martial arts novels focus on things like Asian necromancy. I dunno, it’s just interesting.)

‘Just what is it, then?’

An entire person disappeared in front of his eyes. Just because of a single stone that was thrown on the ground. Un Hui looked at Cho Ryu Hyang with a curious gaze.

Right then, Cho Ryu Hyang, who was busily drawing something on the ground, suddenly puked out fresh blood and fell down on his hands.

‘This is it.’

The feeling he got after the initial pain. This feeling was something instant, but it felt like he was becoming one with the world.

It was a feeling that made his body’s senses extend outside his body.

‘Compared to the giant being we call the world, I am a very tiny being.’

Because of that fact, when Cho Ryu Hyang became one with the world, his pain would fade away extremely fast. This was what powered the Moon Edge Blade Technique itself.

Cho Ryu Hyang turned his hands into tight little fists. His body was still violently trembling.

He had to endure the pain before he became one with the world, but it was extremely hard to do this.

The Jia (鉈) of the Moon Edge Blade Technique.

He used it, but he still couldn't endure that previous attack from No Jin Nyung. He almost died.

“Are you alright? Eating this should make you feel a little better.”

When Un Hui handed Cho Ryu Hyang a Mystical Energy Pill, Cho Ryu Hyang didn't refuse him, and ate it.



The moment the Mystical Energy Pill was consumed, Cho Ryu Hyang made a surprised expression. The pill just turned to liquid form as soon as it touched the tongue, and slid down the throat to stabilize the entire body.

It didn't stop there, and gave energy to him. His breathing became easy in and instant, and his wounds stopped bleeding as much.

How could the pill be so effective? This wasn't a normal pill at all, was it?

Did Un Hui read Cho Ryu Hyang's thoughts? He smiled and opened his mouth.

"This is a pill created with great care by the master of the medicinal house himself. He told me to give it to you if you were to fall in danger."

Cho Ryu Hyang understood what just happened thanks to Un Hui's explanation. If it was Sunwu Jo Duk, the master of the medicinal house, making something like this would easily be within his reach.

That was the only thing Cho Ryu Hyang had thought at the time, but this pill was something much more special than he might've thought.

It was something that Sunwu Jo Duk spent an entire year's worth of time to create. Even with that much time, only ten of them were ever produced.

This was something that made even Gongson Chun Gi, who never really relied on medicines, praise by saying 'This is pretty

darn good’.

Precious Undying Heart Pill (不死護心丹).

This fancy name was something that Gongson Chun Gi declared to be the official name of this pill.

“Would you move away for a second?”

When Cho Ryu Hyang said this as he wiped away the blood on his mouth, Un Hui moved away from his master in an instant. Everything this young master of his did was every strange.

Just what would his master do this time? He was curious as to how Cho Ryu Hyang made that Harmonious expert disappear, too.

Un Hui was now simply excited about Cho Ryu Hyang’s next move.

‘I don’t have much time.’

There was something Cho Ryu Hyang and Jo Gi Chun created a while back.

The biggest problem a formation had was the process of its creation. It simply took too much time for it to be activated normally.

Jo Gi Chun and Cho Ryu Hyang felt a need to be able to create formations faster, in order to be able to go head-to-head against these martial artists.

They needed something they could protect themselves with. In the world of martial arts, they were powerless as formation masters.

Because of this, the old man and the child crazed about mathematics worked day and night in order to come up with something to protect themselves.

The result was a formation that would activate only on a certain spot that fit certain requirements.

The requirements were usually very particular, and the duration the formation was kept active was very short, but the formation itself could be formed extremely fast.

‘Conditional Formation (規陳法).’

Cho Ryu Hyang made a sorrowful face as he fixed his glasses.

The Conditional formation was the first thing he had ever made with his teacher, Jo Gi Chun. None of them at the time knew that the formation would come to use as soon as this, though.

‘I need to hurry.’

Conditional formations lasted only for a short amount of time. It's power was pretty weak, too. The formation basically sacrificed power for time.

The formation that No Jin Nyung was currently in was the Five Star (五星: North, South, East, West, Center) Defending formation, which had 5 stones as its core.

‘How long would it take to break this?’

His opponent was a Harmonious expert. Cho Ryu Hyang wasn't exactly sure of what the limits of the body of an Harmonious expert was.

To be honest, when the formation first activated, Cho Ryu Hyang became very relaxed. Even though Conditional Formations were relatively weak, Cho Ryu Hyang had the vision that he got from Zhuge Liang.

The Faultless view of the World let him see through the true form of the world itself. Thanks to this, Cho Ryu Hyang was able to create a formation many times stronger than the ones created by normal formation masters.

‘But that's it.’

Right. That was it. Come to think of it, he wasn't sure just how well the formation would work against a harmonious expert.

He could only be able to see how well something would work if he substituted someone else in place of No Jin Nyung. Who should he choose, then? Cho Ryu Hyang scrolled through every one of the experts he had met in the past fervently.

‘Yu Sul Bin.’

Cho Ryu Hyang decided to replace No Jin Nyung with Yu Sul Bin and decided to create the formation based on Yu Sul Bin’s strength.

When Cho Ryu Hyang began to create a formation with Yu Sul Bin in his mind, something violently stirred inside his mind.

Krrr–!

Cho Ryu Hyang looked forward with a hateful gaze without realizing it. He had calculated countless formations in order to kill No Jin Nyung in an instant.

Tens and hundreds of formations filled his mind. Pure rage was boiling inside him. Just thinking of Yu Sul Bin made him feel like his blood flow was reversing.

‘Calm down.’

No Jin Nyung was not Yu Sul Bin. He couldn’t kill No Jin Nyung. He just had to create a formation, assuming that No Jin Nyung’s

power was equal to Yu Sul Bin's.

Cho Ryu Hyang calmed himself with great care, and moved. He was already familiar with the environment around him.

The only thing he had left to do was to find an object that would serve as a 'barrier'. Cho Ryu Hyang carefully observed the square border of the Five Star Defending formation, and ran forward.

'Eight for now.'

Cho Ryu Hyang, using the formation No Jin Nyung was trapped in as the center, put seven pebbles around the Five Star Defending formation.

The eight pebble that would complete the octagonal formation was in Cho RYU Hyang's hand.

Cho Ryu Hyang smiled bitterly as he fondled the pebble in his hand. This was a formation he had personally experienced a long time ago.

'Eight Gates Restraining Formation (八門禁鎖陳).'

The first formation his teacher ever showed him. He was using that formation. Cho Ryu Hyang looked at the sky for a moment, and measured the time.

‘If my prediction is correct.....’

The Five Star Defending formation would last about seven minutes. By that time, No Jin Nyung should have destroyed the formation and escaped.

Then, just how much time did he have left? Cho Ryu Hyang first used the pebbles as reference to draw out the border of the formation.

He was finished. Everything was prepared. Cho Ryu Hyang, exhausted, sat down on the ground.

Un Hui was observing all this carefully from the back. He had realized something as he observed his young master work.

‘So it was a formation.’

He had finally understood what his master was doing. Everything his master did so far so confusing so far, and he finally understood why.

His master was a master of formations. But there was still something Un Hui was confused about. According to his knowledge, formations couldn’t be made that easily.

It needed to fit countless requirements, and needed much preparation. But his master managed to create a formation without any of that.

‘Would something like that actually activate?’

Could a formation be made that easily? He was looking at the whole thing with a curious gaze, then felt something strange.

‘Something’s happening?’

Un Hui was about to make out what was going on.

Crack–!

With a sound of a shell breaking, the empty space above Cho Ryu Hyang’s formation shattered like glass, and No Jin Nyung climbed out from that space.

“Uhahaha! I win!”

The moment No Jin Nyung shouted out tiredly with his entire body sweating profusely, Cho Ryu Hyang threw out a stone with a bitter face. No Jin Nyung stared Cho Ryu Hyang do this at this with wide eyes.

Tok–

The stone fell on the ground.

“You won’t be disappointed this time.”

“Hey, this is chea.....”

Paa–!

Before No Jin Nyung could even finish his sentence, he disappeared.

Chapter 74. The Demonic Witch Is A Sufferer of Men-Hating Syndrome

Sunwu Cho Rin, the one dubbed with the title “Demon Witch” and “The Prettiest Woman in The Church” was staring at her father with a hateful gaze.

“Are you telling me to build a good relationship with the Heir? That kid?”

“Yeah.”

The family leader of the Sunwu family, Sunwu Gang Jin (鮮干強震), looked at his daughter with a tired face.

Because his daughter was so straightforward and forceful, he had pretty much let her do whatever she wanted, but he couldn't let her do that this time.

Now, he wanted to at least [borrow the paws of a cat](#) for his family, but..

(TL: Meaning he'd try risky things in order to help his family)

“No.”

It was an immediate rejection. He had expected it already, but Sunwu Gang Jin still frowned.

“You damn girl, you’re rejecting your poor father’s desperate request for help? Shouldn’t you at least pretend to think a bit before saying no?”

Sunwu Cho Rin crossed her arms, and smirked.

“Just what about that was desperate?”

“Can’t you see from this face of mine?”

Sunwu Gang Jin tried to look as pitiful as possible, but Sunwu Cho Rin was unmoved.

“Dad, stop. You’re making a fool out of yourself.”

“.....I raised you wrongly.”

When Sunwu Gang Jin looked up at the sky with a face of regret, Sunwu Cho Rin fondled the whip curled up next to her waist, and opened her mouth.

“You told me that before already. Nothing would change even if you say that.”

“You damn girl..... Shouldn’t you respond after thinking a little, though? Eh? Shouldn’t you do that, at least in consideration for your dear father?”

“I thought about it already.”

“Huh? When?”

“Just now.”

Her reply was filled with too much confidence. Sunwu Cho Rin, who seemed to be thinking about something as she talked, suddenly glared at her father with eyes blazing with a crazy light.

“I never expected you to ask me to do something like this.”

Her face seemed had an expression of deep regret on it. Sunwu Gang Jin looked at this face of his daughter with an astounded expression.

“Can’t you do this for the family just this once? This father’s working so hard for the family..... you should help every once in a while.....”

“You know how much I hate even having to look at men.”

“Wait, how’s that kid even a man? He doesn’t even have a bit of hair on him.”

“I still don’t like him.”

Sunwu Gang Jin made a regretful expression, but his daughter was immovable.



‘That crazy sickness of hers is acting up again.’

His daughter, Sunwu Cho Rin, hated men from a young age. This was what was known as the Men-hating syndrome, alternatively known to Sunwu Gang Jin as the “crazy sickness”.

This was always a problem.

‘I only have myself to blame for it, though.....’

Sunwu Gang Jin looked up at the sky with a sorrowful expression. Sunwu Cho Rin's beauty could evidently be seen even from a young age.

She was on a different level compared to other girls. Sunwu Gang Jin treasured his daughter because of this, and treated her preciously to an abnormal level.

—Any man other than daddy are wolves, alright? If you manage to let your guard down even a little, they'll devour you.

He always warned her like so, and whenever he saw a little boy of her age, he would point out each one of them to her and drove his theory into her mind.

‘Isn't this something that all dads do, though?’

Sunwu Gang Jin knew that he was slightly at fault here for letting his daughter grow like this.

But he never knew his daughter would actually become this way. When he first tried to get her betrothed to someone, she refused. This actually made him happy.

He wanted to get her to marry someone, but he thought that having his daughter in the house would actually make things less boring.

‘You only like it for the first two times she does it, though.....’

Sunwu Gang Jin released a deep sigh. He had gotten progressively more worried each time Sunwu Cho Rin refused to get married.

So one time, he brought a man to the house without warning. Sunwu Cho Rin knocked the man unconscious with a single blow.

That was only the beginning. A title known as the ‘Demon Witch’ stuck to her because she kept on knocking out every man that came to the house.

And the bigger problem lay in her great martial prowess. Thanks to her talent, Sunwu Cho Rin became powerful enough to even make her father afraid to speak out against her.

Even Sunwu Gang Jin, the leader of one of the four great families, was afraid of Sunwu Cho Rin. Obviously, none of the young men in the entire church was foolish enough to approach her.

“Girl.”

“What?”

It was an extremely rebellious face. It looked like Sunwu Gang Jin’s cute, lovely daughter died a long time ago.

Sunwu Gang Jin's face turned sorrowful when he realized this, but he immediately steeled his heart and opened his mouth.

“Do you know that the Church is about to move out to Sichuan?”

“Yes.”

Sunwu Cho Rin was the Assistant Palace Master of the Ruling Fire House.

There was no way she wouldn't know about this. Sunwu Gang Jin nodded with a face that implied that he had expected this already.

“Then you must also know that the Ruling Fire House will be at the front lines of this expedition.”

“.....What?”

Sunwu Gang Jin grinned when Sunwu Cho Rin made a stupefied face.

“It's been decided just moments ago by the Headquarters. But anyway, the Ruling Fire House is set to get to the frontlines of this mission. They're trying to make use of the fact that you're all females. After all, having females would make moving to Sichuan easier by itself.”

Sunwu Cho Rin could understand what was going on now.

People usually didn't get too cautious about female martial artists. This was probably why the Ruling Fire House was set to be at the front lines.

"That's why I'm asking you to befriend the Heir."

"How's that supposed to be related to all this?"

"Of course it's related."

Sunwu Cho Rin's eyes narrowed in suspicion. Sunwu Gang Jin smiled faintly when he saw this, and spoke.

"The Administrator of this entire operation is the Heir."

"What? But the Heir is still....."

Wasn't he still young? Too young? Wasn't it too irresponsible to leave the entire operation to a child like this?

Before Sunwu Cho Rin could say anything, her father spoke first.

"This was decided by the Pope himself. Unlike other times, the Pope was very adamant about this."

“.....”

She had nothing to say.

‘Is the Pope telling me to take care of a child?’

Sunwu Gang Jin opened his mouth the moment Sunwu Cho Rin frowned.

“Don’t look at this mission as a simple babysitting mission. That kid is apparently special enough to get the trust of the Pope himself.”

“.....”

Right. The Pope usually did everything by himself, because he himself was extremely skilled at everything. There was rarely a case where he ever relied on others for anything.

But this time was different. Just what about that kid was special?

“What do you want me to do?”

Sunwu Gang Jin faintly smiled at his daughter’s question.

“Even if you don’t like it, try to build a good relationship with that kid. That should be enough for now.”

Weaknesses and habits would eventually reveal themselves, as long as they maintained a good relationship with the Heir. Sunwu Gang Jin looked at his daughter with expectant eyes while thinking this.

Cho Ryu Hyang stretched a bit, and looked forward. He then made a surprised expression.

‘He managed to endure?’

Cho Ryu Hyang didn’t know how strong a Harmonious expert was. This was why he didn’t restrain the power of the formation when he set it up, but the formation was still active.

That meant that the person inside the formation was still conscious, and was actively resisting against the formation.

‘It should be the fifth level by now.....’

There are a total of eight transformations in the Eight Gates Restraining Formation. After that, the transformations the formation goes through turns irregular, so not even Cho Ryu Hyang knew what would happen.

Cho Ryu Hyang thought for a while as he rubbed his hands together. If he delayed this further, the person in the formation

could actually die.

‘Can I do it?’

A formation separated the real world from the formation world based on its borders. As the person outside the formation, even the creator, Cho Ryu Hyang, couldn’t see what was happening inside.

But he needed to see what was going on. He needed information.

‘I need to keep him near death, but still alive.....’

This was hard. But it wasn’t like he could delay this any longer. There was no time to worry about all this.

Cho Ryu Hyang rubbed his hands a bit with an unconfident face. He then made a determined face, and looked forward.

He carefully observed the area where the formation was laid out. He looked at the borders of the formation carefully, then extended his hand outward.

Voom–

A shock reverberated across his hand along with a cold chill. Cho Ryu Hyang’s eyes shook a little. This was an area unknown to him.

Thankfully, the cold chill he initially got from touching the formation faded quickly. Cho Ryu Hyang let out a sigh of relief.

‘I managed to get through the first problem.’

Things would get important from here. Cho Ryu Hyang wasn't affected by the formation due to the fact that only a part of his body was in the formation.

Going into an active formation like this was normally extremely dangerous. The formation could actually suck the person touching it inside. That would be the end for that person.

Thankfully, since Cho Ryu Hyang knew the formation very well, he was able to touch the weaker part of the formation. The gamble that staked his life actually succeeded.

This was only possible because Cho Ryu Hyang had extensive knowledge about formations and mathematics, one that was comparable to Jo Gi Chun's.

Anyways, normally nothing would happen if only a body part entered a formation like this. Cho Ryu Hyang wouldn't be able to get the information he wanted just by sticking his hand in a formation.

But this wasn't the end. Cho Ryu Hyang had a secret weapon that no one else had.

‘Faultless View of The World.’

He exhaled slowly, and focused. Then, he slowly started seeing the inner parts of the formation.

‘It worked!’

Cho Ryu Hyang was delighted. Having one of his ideas actually work made him excited.

A vague shape resembling No Jin Nyung could be seen in Cho Ryu Hyang’s eyes. No Jin Nyung was currently trying to punch the giant ice boulder that was falling towards him.

Baang–!

At the same time, Cho Ryu Hyang could hear No Jin Nyung complaining.

“Damn it! I’m not gonna lose! I’m not gonna lose!”

Cho Ryu Hyang grinned when he heard No Jin Nyung’s shout. It appeared seemingly exhausted man, still had some strength left.

White steam billowed out of his entire body. He was trying his best to survive in the formation.

‘So he isn’t a Harmonious expert for nothing.’

It wouldn’t be weird if No Jin Nyung died right now. But he actually managed to survive even when facing a natural disaster like this.

‘The Sea of Extreme Cold.’

Cho Ryu Hyang frowned due to the cold that made his fingers go numb. He then started to focus in order to break away from the effects of the formation.

After getting some distance between him and the formation, Cho Ryu Hyang tried his best to calm his heart. He had experienced the power of the formation indirectly, and this was already enough to begin paralysing his entire hand.

Cho Ryu Hyang looked back at No Jin Nyung. No Jin Nyung was currently moving as fast as he could.

No Jin Nyung had no choice but to do this because of the cold, and the giant ice boulders that fell from the skies.

Tukakaka–!

No Jin Nyung was constantly moving upwards, either by stepping on these boulders or breaking them.

“Damn it!”

There was only a black sea around him. If he fell inside that sea in this temperature, even a Harmonious expert like him would die.

Cho Ryu Hyang came to a conclusion after observing all this for a moment.

‘It should be over after this.’

No Jin Nyung was doing his best to live, but it was obvious that he wouldn’t last. Even a Harmonious expert had limits.

It was amazing already that he managed to survive this long, but that was it. Cho Ryu Hyang began to focus a little. If he was correct, the next transformation should be occurring now. As expected.

Rumble–!

A thunder roared from the dark, cloudy sky.

The sixth transformation of the Eight Gates Restraining Formation.

‘The Spear of the Thunder God.’

No Jin Nyung was currently standing on one leg on an ice boulder floating in the middle of the sea. After surveying the sky for a bit, he frowned.

A sound of a thunder roaring could be heard in the distance, but now it was deathly quiet. The ice boulders that fell from the skies stopped coming, too.

This was not a good sign.

Dokun, dokun–

His heart was thumping crazily.

‘Hooh, haah.’

No Jin Nyung, who was looking at the area near him with worried eyes, licked his lips subconsciously.

It felt like his whole body was going to explode from tension. The moment he wet his lips with his tongue.

Kukwakwakwakwa–!

His sight was filled to the brim with white lightning rods.

“Fuck.....”

No Jin Nyung fainted.

Chapter 75. Who's Cho Ryu Hyang's Right Arm?

“Are you nervous?”

“Of course I am. I can't even sleep nowadays because I'm so nervous. I never knew the Pope would choose the Heir to lead the entire operation. This is too early for that.”

“This is the choice the Pope himself made. Trust him.”

Um Seung Do scratched his head at his friend's confident voice.

“I wish. But you know my job doesn't allow me to.”

“So it's an occupational hazard.”

“That's right. An occupational hazard. It's a hazard where I have to be suspicious of anything and everything no matter how much I want to believe it.”

The man on the other side of Um Seung Do smiled faintly.

“You're working hard, I see. That's good.”

“Haa.. I have no choice. The person I serve just makes me work hard.”

“It looks like Guardian Ok Gwan Ho is using you well.”

Guardian Ok Gwan Ho, one of the eight Guardians of the church, had no match under the heavens when it came to [Qinggong Technique](#) (輕功術)

A technique that makes your body light, and make you be able to jump with ease.

As the Guardian with the title of Thousand Li Flying Demon (千里飛魔), he took care of the information department of the church as the administrator of the Hidden Demon Corps (秘魔隊).

“You think this counts as ‘using me well’? He’s just enslaving me. He just works me to the bone. Have you noticed that I lost weight recently? Seriously, if you just see how old man Ok handles his subordinates, you’ll just sigh in admiration. He just works people right up to their limits and stops there. Every single time. The problem is, I’m the one he’s working to the bone here. Anyways, he’s an amazing fellow.”

“The Pope put you under Guardian Ok Gwan Ho’s care because he trusted that personality of the Guardian’s. Study well under him. For the church.”

“For the church.....right. I wouldn’t even be able to do this if it wasn’t for that, damn it. But honestly, nowadays it feels like living in the battlefield might be good for me. I chose that desk job back then for nothing. Why can’t the Pope just change my job?”

The man who had been listening to Um Seung Do's rant looked at Um Seung Do silently for a while, then opened his mouth.

"Is it that hard?"

"Yeah. I feel like my head's about to burst nowadays. I have more things to do now that the Royal Palace is making its move. I'm about to go crazy because of those guys."

A friend of Um Seung Do, and the leader of the greatest force in the church, Mara's Heavenly Wind Division, Lim Hak Gyum. He nodded as he filled Um Seung Do's glass with alcohol.

"My chances of surviving increases the harder you work."

"....."

"I'm thankful for that."

"You bastard, saying so awkward things like that all of the sudden..... I'm almost ready, though. We should be able to head out to Sichuan soon enough. You'll be going too, right?"

"Yes. I have to protect the Heir."

The Mara's Heavenly Wind Division, the division that works under the Pope himself. Half of them were going out in order to protect Cho Ryu Hyang.

“This one..... will be dangerous. The Heir isn’t like the Pope. His martial arts isn’t completed yet.”

“I know.”

“You must know this, but the enemies aren’t just outside the church.”

“I know this too.”

The Pope, Gongson Chun Gi, wasn’t someone who needed bodyguards. Thanks to this, the Mara’s Heavenly Wind Division usually just took care of petty tasks.

But it was different with the Heir, Cho Ryu Hyang. They had to protect the Heir with their lives. The position of the Heir was already enough to make themselves risk their lives for, after all.

No one would know just when and where an attack would come from.

‘I can’t understand it.’

Um Seung Do never said this, but he was always curious about it.

Why would the Pope send out Cho Ryu Hyang, who was already in danger, outside?

Lim Hak Gyum looked out at the moon in the window, and opened his mouth.

“I still haven’t forgotten the Pope I saw eight years ago at the Island of Hell.”

“.....Eight years ago.....”

Um Seung Do’s smiling eyes calmed down slowly.

Eight years. That was when Lim Hak Gyum and Um Seung Do had passed the hardest testing ground ever created in the church, the Island of Hell (地獄島).

It was a competition of survival that got closed after one round because of its difficulty and death rate.

Hundreds of comrades who went in with them had died or had gotten injured to the point of no recovery, but Um Seung Do and Lim Hak Gyum managed to crawl out of that hellhole somehow.

And next to them was the Pope, who was dressed extremely lightly.

“You’re here? Congrats.”

Gongson Chun Gi handed them both a bowl of alcohol, and

grinned.

He was waiting for them on his own, without any servants or bodyguards.

A person who broke all sorts of rules by himself. This was who Gongson Chun Gi was.

“At the time, we were both deeply moved by the Pope. But when I think about it now, it was really a simple tactic. A carrot after the whip.....”

Lim Hak Gyum faintly smiled, and chipped in.

“But it was the tastiest carrot in the world.”

“True.”

The alcohol they drank and the meat they ate at the time couldn't be compared to any kind of food they ate afterwards. Um Seung Do looked at Lim Hak Gyum and spoke.

“You can die out there if you need to, but don't you ever die a useless death. I'd get embarrassed.”

“I know.”

“.....but don’t die if you can. I would like that more.”

“I’ll try.”

Um Seung Do put down his glass, took up the bottle of alcohol, drank from it, then opened his mouth.

“Shouldn’t we live a good life like one of the eight Guardians? I’d be mad if I died after working this hard. I wouldn’t even be able to die because of how angry I’d be. Don’t you think?”

“Fine. I won’t die.”

“You promised”

Um Seung Do smiled faintly. He had heard what he wanted to hear.

Lim Hak Gyum looked at Um Seung Do quietly. Um Seung Do did the same.

After a long period of silence, Lim Hak Gyum opened his mouth.

“What do you know about the Heir?”

It was a sudden question. Um Seung Do thought for a bit, then shook his head.

“I don’t know. That would be the most accurate answer that I have right now.”

“That’s good.”

Um Seung Do was confused.

“Weren’t you here so that you could ask me about that? How’s this supposed to be good?”

“The fact that even you cannot judge the Heir is just good news to me.”

Um Seung Do drank from his cup with a bitter face.

“I actually researched quite a lot about the Heir after I met him. I was curious, too. I got quite a bit of info about him, starting from his past habits, all the way to hobbies and eating habits and such..... but I still don’t get it. It’s all kind of blurry to me. This is a first for me.”

“This just makes me feel even better.”

When Lim Hak Gyum smiled, Um Seung Do responded with a troubled face.

“I know one thing for sure, though.”

Um Seung Do looked straight at Lim Hak Gyum.

“The Pope chose the Heir because he saw something that I didn’t. It probably had something to do with the future of this church.”

Lim Hak Gyum nodded. The Pope was able to see things others could see. And his judgement was never wrong.

“I hope the Pope’s decision this time isn’t wrong.....”

Um Seung Do said this as he took another swig from the bottle. This mission had too many variables this time. It made Um Seung Do nervous.

Cho Ryu Hyang stared at No Jin Nyung, who was sprawled out on the floor like a corpse. Him getting curious about the power of the formation really had almost killed the man.

‘It was close.’

No Jin Nyung’s red skin, and his burnt clothing made him look like he was just rescued from a pit of fire.

If Cho Ryu Hyang had deactivated the formation a little slower, No Jin Nyung would’ve surely died.

“What shall we do?”

When Un Hui asked this as he appeared next to Cho Ryu Hyang, Cho Ryu Hyang began to think. It would be troublesome if No Jin Nyung woke up and started to cause a scene.

No Jin Nyung was a harmonious expert. He could not be contained with just strength.

‘Why did teacher send me someone like this?’

Cho Ryu Hyang tried to think about what his teacher was thinking, then shook his head.

He thought there was no use in thinking about such things. He could always ask later.

“Let’s wait until he wakes up. Will you help me move him?”

“Alright.”

Un Hui easily lifted No Jin Nyung, and put the man on a wooden bench next to Cho Ryu Hyang’s living quarters. He then looked at Cho Ryu Hyang and spoke.

“You should rest. I’ll take care of him.”

Cho Ryu Hyang looked at Un Hui with a tired face for a second, and nodded. Come to think of it, an expert of Un Hui's strength should easily be able to take care of No Jin Nyung.

“Then I'll come back after washing myself.”

“Understood.”

When Un Hui said this with a confident voice, Cho Ryu Hyang went in. He was trying to take care of the situation after washing himself, so that he could handle this matter with a clear mind.

How much time had passed since Cho Ryu Hyang walked in tiredly?

Un Hui extended his senses, confirmed his distance from the Heir, and opened his mouth with cold eyes.

“I know you're awake.”

“.....!”

No Jin Nyung's eyebrows twitched a little at that moment. After thinking whether he should stand up or not, No Jin Nyung just decided to keep pretending to be dead.

Un Hui, who saw this, opened his mouth.

“Are you pretending to have fainted because you need to recover? It’s useless.”

Un Hui slowly moved towards No Jin Nyung. Very slowly. But even that slow movement seemed very significant to No Jin Nyung.

At the same time, an immense pressure enveloped No Jin Nyung’s body. It was a creepy feeling, as if a giant snake was wrapping around his body.

“I’m not as kind as the Heir. Also, I’m not even in a good mood right now.”

A low voice. The cold energy contained in that voice made No Jin Nyung stand up and begin complaining.

“.....Bastard. I was going to stand back up, anyway.”

He just needed time to think. Right, that was it. The bet with Gongson Chun Gi. He lost in that bet.

He felt sad. A kid’s minion? Wasn’t this too awkward?

Un Hui looked at No Jin Nyung, who had a depressed expression on his face, then spoke quietly.

“I don’t care about how you treat me, but you should act properly in front of the Heir. I don’t even need to work hard to kill you, anyway.”

No Jin Nyung’s lips trembled lightly. He was slightly pissed at Un Hui’s threat.

“Don’t be so confident. If it wasn’t for my wound, I would’ve been able to take care of you in one hit.”

Un Hui smiled.

“You’re quite confident. Do you trust in your incomplete martial art that much?”

“Of course.”

Un Hui and No Jin Nyung glared at each other. Was it because both of them were about the same age, and were both Harmonious experts?

There was a strange feeling that the two shared at that moment. It was rivalry, and it was the type that only men got at times.

The feeling of having their blood boil. The one who looked away first, unexpectedly enough, was Un Hui.

“You should recover first.”

No Jin Nyung's eye twitched. He knew that Un Hui was being considerate for him.

But wasn't this just that? Sympathy? It was shitty sympathy. When he realized this, he was angered.

No Jin Nyung felt something come up his throat at the same time, and frowned.

The metallic taste that filled his mouth. To experts like he, emotional wounds hurt more than physical wounds.

His weakened body was unable to contain his anger, which led to an internal injury.

‘Shit.’

But he couldn't bring himself to show his injury on the outside. No Jin Nyung forcefully swallowed the blood that was coming up his throat.

This sort of behavior just made his injury worse, but he didn't really care about that right now.

‘Kuh.’

His intestines boiled, as if he had swallowed a ball of fire. He was

about to faint from the pain, but he desperately managed to hold on.

His rage enabled him to be like this. Right then, Un Hui, who was turned away from him, spoke softly.

“The Heir is much greater than you think. He is worthy of your services.”

“.....”

Un Hui kept talking, while No Jin Nyung was desperately trying to control his insides.

“No Jin Nyung, was it? We’ll have to sort out who’s stronger later on for the future.”

Un Hui had accepted a bet from the Heir, and became the Heir’s subordinate. Wasn’t this guy also in a similar situation?

As No Jin Nyung was now Cho Ryu Hyang’s subordinate, there was a need to see who was stronger of the two.

“I’ll be waiting for your recovery.”

This was an official challenge. If No Jin Nyung refused this, he wouldn’t be a man.

“.....You can look forward to it.”

No Jin Nyung opened his mouth tiredly, and grinned. He can take care of his anger at the fight. He won't lost. In a normal fight, in a normal martial arts fight, there was no way he'd lose.

“I'll do that, then.”

The two thus made a promise, and waited for Cho Ryu Hyang to return.



Chapter 76. The Second Bodyguard

The Ryun of The Moon Edge Blade Technique.

It was something that allowed the user to be able to control the body perfectly.

Even parts of the body Cho Ryu Hyang could not sense were being controlled by the Moon Edge Blade Technique.

Cho Ryu Hyang found that out for the first time when he looked at the mirror after washing himself.

He had made a confused face because he felt something was off.

‘What’s going on?’

Cho Ryu Hyang tilted his head in confusion as he touched his wet head.

Something seemed to have changed, but he didn’t know what.

It felt like he was forgetting something extremely important, something that shouldn’t be missed.

‘Think.’

After looking at the mirror for some time, Cho Ryu Hyang widened his eyes and began to touch his face.

He looked down on the table in front of him with narrowed eyes.

‘I can see clearly, even without glasses?’

Cho Ryu Hyang had bad vision from a young age.

His sight was always clouded and fuzzy.

It was partly because of his addiction to books, but that wasn’t all.

He didn’t know why, but he seemed to have bad vision since the very beginning.

Because of this, the pair of glasses that his father attained with great effort in his work, became an important part of his life.

But now, he was able to see the world around him clearly even without his glasses.

The world that he saw currently seemed extremely clean and beautiful, as if a cloud of fog had been lifted from it.

Cho Ryu Hyang rubbed his several times, just to check if he

wasn't imagining things or anything.

He wasn't.

Cho Ryu Hyang put on a dazed expression for a bit, then realized that he had something to check and searched for his glasses.

‘If I’m correct.....’

Cho Ryu Hyang carefully put on his glasses.

At the same time, the world in front of him blurred, and his vision shook.

His broken sight made his head spin, but Cho Ryu Hyang bit his lips and waited.

After a moment, a change he was expecting happened, Cho Ryu Hyang crossed his arms, and looked at the table.

‘Is this the power of the Moon Edge Blade Technique?’

He could see the table clearly, even without his glasses on.

When he focused on trying to see something, his body reacted accordingly.

This was a very important change.

After all, it was proof that even parts of the body that could normally be unable to be controlled could be controlled with just a thought.

Cho Ryu Hyang thought for a bit, then walked out with his glasses on.

There was no need to put his glasses on anymore, but he was just too used to wearing them.

The injuries he had gotten from No Jin Nyung earlier had fully healed already.

When Cho Ryu Hyang walked out with a satisfactory smile, he could see No Jin Nyung and Un Hui glare at each other.

Cho Ryu Hyang sensed that there was something going on between them, and asked them a question.

“Did you make your decision?”

No Jin Nyung’s face twitched.

He knew who Cho Ryu Hyang was talking to.

But this was already a done matter.

He didn't need to complain, nor had to hold any grudges.

No Jin Nyung scratched the back of his head, then stood up with trembling legs.

He breathed deeply, and kneeled towards Cho Ryu Hyang and opened his mouth,

“No Jin Nyung, the disciple of the Berserking Blood Demon, Gwon Gang Min, swears on his life that he will serve the heir for the rest of his life.”

Cho Ryu Hyang calmly looked at No Jin Nyung for a moment, and opened his mouth.

“Just staying with me would endanger your life.”

Cho Ryu Hyang was not a fool.

He knew very well about what was going on in the church, and knew that he was in great danger.

He was like a tightrope walker walking above a cliff of unfathomable height.

Gongson Chun Gi was just handing Cho Ryu Hyang some support in order to survive.

The Pope would make it so that it would feel as if Cho Ryu Hyang was in a life-death situation, but never make it so that Cho Ryu Hyang's life was actually endangered.

‘That is how teacher likes to work.’

Cho Ryu Hyang smiled bitterly.

Gongson Chun Gi was not always a kind teacher.

The Pope had the capability to make cold-hearted, cruel decisions whenever he needed to.

If Cho Ryu Hyang ever failed to meet the Pope's expectations, he would be cut off immediately.

That would immediately lead to his death.

‘Haah.’

Cho Ryu Hyang straightened out his clothes, and smiled inwardly.

He was happy that his teacher brought him a subordinate, but he honestly didn't want to get someone involved in all this danger.

Him being in danger was enough, already.

Having Un Hui in this mess bothered him quite a bit already.

Right then, No Jin Nyung hesitated a bit, then spoke while scratching the back of his head.

“The Pope said something to m..... ah, he said something to your subordinate before this..... my lord.”

Cho Ryu Hyang made a curious expression when he heard No Jin Nyung's stuttering speech.

His teacher said something? Just what was it?

Cho Ryu Hyang became curious.

“..... Would you like me to relay his message?”

“Please do so.”

No Jin Nyung coughed a few times, straightened his back, and opened his mouth.

“Even though he looks like an arrogant and stubborn child, he’s actually really interesting. He’s actually funnier than he looks. You’ll see when you meet him.”

“.....”

Cho Ryu Hyang blinked a few times in confusion when he came face to face with No Jin Nyung’s perfect imitation of Gongson Chun Gi.

The way he talked, and the playful facial expressions he made matched Gongson Chun Gi perfectly.

It was a spectacular imitation.

Unexpectedly enough, No Jin Nyung was actually more talented at this kind of stuff.

Then, the playful expression on No Jin Nyung’s face immediately turned into Gongson Chun Gi’s serious face.

He looked at Cho Ryu Hyang straight in the eye, and spoke.

“I can guarantee that a monster like this won’t ever be born in this world ever again. He is truly worth your time.”

Cho Ryu Hyang, at that moment, heard Gongson Chun Gi’s voice overlap with No Jin Nyung’s.

No Jin Nyung was just that skilled at imitating others.

Cho Ryu Hyang readjusted his glasses, and spoke.

“I told you before, but you’ll have to be ready for death at all times if you choose to serve me. You’ll probably have a higher chance of dying than living.”

No Jin Nyung thought a bit when he heard Cho Ryu Hyang’s words, but then shook his head almost immediately.

‘As simply as possible.’

Everything in this world was simpler than one might expect. It was just jumbled up in complicated ways.

When he organized everything he knew together, his head became clear and he was able to see an answer.

‘As I thought, simple is best.’

No Jin Nyung spoke with a bright face, as if he had taken a load off his chest.

His speech was much more refined and stopped forcing himself to act respectfully. His tone just naturally turned more respectful.

“You have beaten me, who was on a Harmonious level, at a young age. You would most definitely do greater things in the future. I believe it would be alright to risk my life if I were to be able to see what you’ll accomplish in the future.”

Cho Ryu Hyang looked at No Jin Nyung with a serious gaze.

He was surprised at No Jin Nyung’s sudden change in attitude, but he knew that it was just how No Jin Nyung functioned.

‘How troublesome.’

Cho Ryu Hyang’s eyes emitted a complicated light when he saw No Jin Nyung’s pure eyes filled with respect.

Just what does he believe in, and what does he want?

‘Nothing’s free in this world.’

This was what Cho Ryu Hyang believed in.

But this No Jin Nyung was just going to follow him?

Wasn’t this the guy the one was trying to kill him moments ago?

When he thought this much, the Dragon Pearl in his dantian

began to move violently.

‘Again?’

Cho Ryu Hyang frowned.

He had experienced this phenomenon once already.

When the Dragon’s Pearl moved, his mind was instantly filled with countless information from everything near him.

Thanks to that, Cho Ryu Hyang was instantly able to figure out what No Jin Nyung was thinking about.

He dumbly stared at No Jin Nyung for a bit.

He then readjusted his glasses for a second.

‘This person is.....’

Simple.

How could there be a person in the world as simple as this?

No Jin Nyung did not question anything, nor did he ever try to think about something in advance.

Because he didn't think, his actions truly could be considered to be "random".

Wasn't he just an exact opposite of Cho Ryu Hyang?

'How surprising.'

What was truly surprising to Cho Ryu Hyang was the fact that he couldn't come up with anything to counter No Jin Nyung's logic.

Cho Ryu Hyang let out a chuckle, and put his hand on No Jin Nyung's shoulder with a smile.

"Please, no matter what happens, don't die. Place your life above my own at all times. Death doesn't do any good for anyone."

"Yes, my lord."

Cho Ryu Hyang stood at No Jin Nyung back up, and spoke.

"You shall be my second bodyguard. And....."

Cho Ryu Hyang glanced at Un Hui, and opened his mouth.

"We'll see when we can set up a time for you two to sort out your ranks after you recover. I also believe that it is absolutely essential

for you to do this.”

“.....!”

Un Hui’s eyes were suddenly filled with confusion.

‘How?’

How did Cho Ryu Hyang pick up his conversation with No Jin Nyung? Did No Jin Nyung send a message to Cho Ryu Hyang?

Un Hui shook his head.

There was no time for No Jin Nyung to do something like that, and No Jin Nyung wasn’t even the type of person to do something like that.

The way Un Hui looked at Cho Ryu Hyang changed multiple times.

He eventually settled with looking at Cho Ryu Hyang with “awe”.

Un Hui had decided that Cho Ryu Hyang was someone who could not be predicted through normal means.

“We’ll go fix you up at the medicinal house, first.”

“Yes, my lord.”

No Jin Nyung stood up with a smile.

He had to recover before fighting Un Hui.

Sunwu Cho Rin hummed while braiding Gongson Ahri’s hair.

While she was a person with the terrible title of the “Demonic Witch”, she would always turn into a kind, gentle woman that resembled an angel in front of Gongson Ahri.

To her, spending time with Gongson Ahri was the most precious time in her life.

‘I’m so happy.’

Sunwu Cho Rin was looking at Gongson Ahri with eyes full of love.

Gongson Ahri, who was letting Sunwu Cho Rin braid her hair, carefully opened her mouth.



“Ling Ling, can I..... go with you?”

“Where?”

“Sichuan.....”

Sunwu Cho Rin paused.

After some time has passed, she opened her mouth.

“Do you want to go to the martial world?”

“Yes.”

“It’s going to be dangerous, though?”

“Rin and Ryung’s going to be with me.”

“They aren’t going to be enough. The martial world is a lot more dangerous than you might think.”

She didn’t want to let her precious Gongson Ahri go to the outside world.

The outside world was a dangerous and unpredictable place.

She wanted to protect Gongson Ahri in a safe, contained environment.

She would normally grant any of Gongson Ahri’s wishes, but this was an exception.

She shook her head with a very worried face.

Gongson Ahri seemed to have felt her shake her head, and turned around to look at her eyes.

“Ling Ling’s going to be there too, though, right?”

Gongson Ahri grabbed onto Sunwu Cho Rin's sleeves lightly and asked one more time with a desperate face.

‘This is.....’

Gongson Ahri, who was looking up at her with puppy eyes, just seemed too lovely.

Sunwu Cho Rin, in the end, opened her mouth with a silly grin.

“I’m busy, you know. I can’t always be with you.”

Sunwu Cho Rin had an expression of pure joy as she forbid Gongson Ahri from going out again.

“I got strong, you know, Ling Ling.”

When Gongson Ahri spoke up with a proud face, Sunwu Cho Rin’s smile just got even wider.

She spoke as she rubbed Gongson Ahri’s hair lightly.

“Do you want to go out that much?”

“Yes.”

Gongson Ahri shook her head vigorously.

What was the outside world like?

From what she had been hearing so far, the outside world seemed to be very violent and dangerous, but it also had something about it that always made Gongson Ahri become fascinated.

She wanted to experience it on her own.

She wouldn't get a chance like this ever again in the future.

Gongson Ahri looked at Sunwu Cho Rin with eyes filled with desperation.

After thinking a bit, Sunwu Cho Rin opened her mouth.

“The Pope probably won't let you go, even if I agreed to it.”

“D, do you think so?”

“Yes.”

“Does that mean I'll be able to go out if he agrees, then?”

Sunwu Cho Rin nodded with a light smile.

There was no way the Pope would grant Gongson Ahri her wish.

Gongson Chun Gi loved Gongson Ahri as much as she did.

There was no way he'd let Gongson Ahri go out into a dangerous world, no matter how much Gongson Ahri desired it.

But.... it seemed that the world was really unpredictable.

After a few days, Sunwu Cho Rin stood in front of Gongson Chun Gi with a complicated face.

Gongson Chun Gi had given permission to allow Gongson Ahri go out.

Chapter 77. Glory Of The Asura's Annihilation Of The Heavens

“Shura Environment is pretty hard to befriend. It has a really picky personality, so you’ll have to adjust yourself to it.”

Gongson Chun Gi was currently sitting in front of Cho Ryu Hyang with a faint smile.

The place they were currently at, the Sacred Heart Temple (聖心殿), was a place that forbid anyone other than the Pope and the Heir from entering.

There was a ceremony taking place at the moment, a ceremony that all Popes went through in the past, and one that Cho Ryu Hyang had to go through.

Not even the bodyguards of Gongson Chun Gi, the Mara's Heavenly Wind Division, or the bodyguards of Cho Ryu Hyang, Un Hui and No Jin Nyung, could get in here.

They were all currently standing outside, prepared to stop anything that tries to get into the temple.

“I would’ve gotten rid of all the side effects if we had time... But unfortunately, we don’t have much of it.”

They really were running out of time.

Cho Ryu Hyang had to lead the church into Sichuan soon.

Before that happened, he had to learn some type of martial technique in order to protect himself.

Gongson Chun Gi took off the two black bracelets he wore on his arms.

He breathed slowly, and looked at Cho Ryu Hyang.

“This might seem a little irresponsible, but you must think of the side effects as homework given to you by your predecessors, and try to get rid of it. We can’t do much about this. I’ve inherited the technique like this from my teacher, too.”

Even the great Gongson Chun Gi was unable to get rid of the side effects of the Shura Environment.

Cho Ryu Hyang knew about this side effect as well.

Even with the dangerous side effect, the Shura Environment tempted the Popes of the past.

Cho Ryu Hyang sat on the ceremonial chair, and quietly looked at Gongson Chun Gi, the strongest martial artist that ever existed within the church.

Gongson Chun Gi's transformation took place at an extreme pace.

Crack–

Gongson Chun Gi's body, now rid of its seals, began to get younger at an extreme pace.

His thin, frail body began to get more muscular. It was like time was being wound up rapidly.

At the same time, Gongson Chun Gi's body began to emit a domineering aura that couldn't be ignored.

Vuum–!

The giant building that was the temple began to vibrate.

The entire area surrounding the temple was filled with the sounds that resembled thousands of screams from hell.

Cho Ryu Hyang bit his lips.

‘Teacher told me to watch this carefully.’

‘Glory of the Asura's Annihilation of the Heavens (阿修羅滅天歡樂珍景).’

The technique that was often referred to as 'Shura Environment'.

The technique that was passed onto the future generations of the Popes.

One of the requirements of inheriting the technique was to look at it calmly.

But this requirement was not something that easy to fulfill.

Cho Ryu Hyang tiredly smiled while sweating profusely.

An aura that seemed capable of destroying everything in the world flowed out naturally from Gongson Chun Gi.

Cho Ryu Hyang had to focus as hard as he could just so that he could breathe.

Even looking at Gongson Chun Gi expended an immense amount of energy.

'So this is the Sura Environment.....'

Even Cho Ryu Hyang, who broke through the first and the largest obstacle of the Moon Edge Blade Technique, could only try to stay awake.

While Cho Ryu Hyang was desperately trying to breathe, Gongson Chun Gi casually slid back his black hair, and smiled confidently.

“What you’re seeing, and feeling right now is the true form of the Shura Environment. This is something that does not succumb to anyone, and is capable of destroying anything in the world. This is the true form of my body, which I have never revealed to the world after the completion of Shura Environment.”

Gongson Chun Gi’s body at its prime.

Each bone, each cell in the body contained a huge amount of destructive power.

Gongson Chun Gi quietly admired his body for a while, then smiled bitterly.

“Since doing this stresses my body quite a bit, we’ll have to work as fast as we can.”

The Shura Environment had to be inherited when its user was at his best.

Only then would the power of the Shura Environment be fully inherited to the next generation.

Because of this, if the next generation wasn't qualified, or wasn't talented enough, he would be swept away by the power of the Shura Environment, and be killed.

But Gongson Chun Gi wasn't worried about that.

He trusted his student.

His student's dantian was as big as the ocean.

It could stomach just about anything and still be fine.

“Now, are you ready to see true hell?”

Gongson Chun Gi spoke with a playful voice.

When he opened his mouth, and exhaled, the air of the temple immediately got heavier.

Breathing alone required a huge amount of energy from the body.

This was power that surpassed the human limits.

Cho Ryu Hyang had to take on that power.

Cho Ryu Hyang felt cold sweat run down his back, and grinned.

“Your disciple is ready.”

Gongson Chun Gi looked at Cho Ryu Hyang for a bit.

He could see that his disciple was able to look at him without fear.

That was enough.

Gongson Chun Gi grinned, and opened his mouth.

“Good. Let’s start.”

When Gongson Chun Gi slowly extended his arms, Cho Ryu Hyang imitated his actions.

Cho Ryu Hyang’s thin, soft hands met with Gongson Chun Gi’s powerful, indestructible hands.

The moment the hands touched, Cho Ryu Hyang felt like his body was being struck with lightning.

When this feeling faded away, he could feel a dark, sinister energy claw its way up his arms.

‘This is.....’

His hands were full of frighteningly dense dark energy.

Chiii--

‘Kuh!’

Cho Ryu Hyang was assaulted both pain that was akin to having his hands dipped in fire, and a cold that seeped into his bones. This caused his eyes to go white while having his whole body tremble violently.

This was simply pure pain, one that made your entire mind go blank.

Thump-

His heart began to beat wildly, like a crazy horse.

The power of the Shura Environment tried to rip apart Cho Ryu Hyang’s body like a fierce predator, Cho Ryu Hyang’s mind was slowly disintegrating.

Gongson Chun Gi began to get a little nervous when he saw this.

‘Shit, this is really dangerous.’



His head kept sending off warning signals.

This was the important part.

The one who inherits the Shura Environment would have to endure the body's rejection of the energy from the Shura Environment.

Gongson Chun Gi knew how much pain his disciple was going through.

He had experienced the same thing a long time ago, after all.

The unspeakable pain that seemed to cut up the body into countless pieces.

But the pain wasn't all that important.

Cho Ryu Hyang just had to avoid ignoring the pain, and falling unconscious.

Falling unconscious would let the energies roaring inside Cho Ryu Hyang to expand outwards, which would cause Cho Ryu Hyang to explode like a firework.

Gongson Chun Gi frowned, and began to think of someone.

'Damn old man! Stop playing and come out! This is the time for you to make your move.'

Gongson Chun Gi couldn't do anything when he was pouring into Cho Ryu Hyang, the power of the Shura Environment.

He would become very weak during this time.

Right then, did he hear Gongson Chun Gi's voice?

A thunderous voice rang out inside Cho Ryu Hyang's mind.

[Endure, greenhorn. Don't try to hide or avoid the pain, and fight

it head-on. Only then will this power be yours.]

Zhuge Liang had finally spoken.

Cho Ryu Hyang's pupils reappeared on his white eyes when he heard Zhuge Liang's angry shout.

Right now, Cho Ryu Hyang's body was filled with blood veins popping out from his skin.

His eyes were turned red due to the veins in it exploding, and his lips began to have blood flowing out of it.

Crack—!

Bones were being reorganized, and the muscles in the body were disassembled, then reassembled at an extreme pace.

This brought Cho Ryu Hyang an unimaginable amount of pain.

‘I was too arrogant.’

Cho Ryu Hyang could see his teacher's worried eyes.

His teacher was worried.

He felt embarrassed.

Cho Ryu Hyang closed his eyes, and bit his teeth.

He then did all he could in order to endure the pain in his body.

He had thought that he went through quite a lot of pain till now.

He gained endurance, and most types of injuries didn't even hurt anymore.

He even started to get prideful of his endurance to pain.

But this was all just arrogance.

Not even the Moon Edge Blade Technique could help him here.

In front of pure pain, there was nothing one could do.

Except to fight it head-on.

‘You’re doing well.’

Gongson Chun Gi let out a sigh of relief when he saw his disciple's current situation.

Cho Ryu Hyang might not know, but it was better for him to be

in pain than to be unconscious.

Losing consciousness would just mean death.

The monster known as the Shura Environment did not lend its power to others easily.

It would go berserk within its future user's entire body, then proceed to create a nest for itself.

‘Wait a little more.’

The biggest obstacle was overcome.

Now, this was just a fight against time.

How much time had passed?

Cho Ryu Hyang began to excrete sweat mixed with blood.

‘As I thought.’

Normally, one would excrete out black blood during this time.

After all, this stage was supposed to be expelling all the foreign material in the body.

But this didn't happen for Cho Ryu Hyang.

Pure, clean blood was flowing out of Cho Ryu Hyang's body.

Gongson Chun Gi had expected this already.

Cho Ryu Hyang's body had been cleaned nicely by the Moon Edge Blade Technique.

This alone made the inheritance ceremony quite easier.

They could skip the unnecessary part of the ceremony this way.

Gongson Chun Gi pushed 'it' inside Cho Ryu Hyang's body.

The moment 'it' entered Cho Ryu Hyang's body.

Tuduk–

Resistance was felt.

'Eh?'

Cho Ryu Hyang suddenly jumped up. It was like his body was about to be shot away from his spot.

He was being assaulted with pain that couldn't even be compared to the one from before.

It was pain akin to having his limbs being ripped apart.

At the same time, Cho Ryu Hyang's ears were filled with countless laughs, and the verses of the Shura Environment.

The verses of the Shura Environment were being imprinted into his brain.

Cho Ryu Hyang's body began to tremble.

A new world was being unfolded in front of his eyes.

At the same time, something disgusting, something indescribable began to come through his harms.

'It' diligently climbed through his arms, and passed his shoulders.

One of them went up into his head, and the other went downwards.

'Kuaaaa!'

One of ‘it’, which climbed downwards while destroying Cho Ryu Hyang’s insides, hesitated when it reached the dantian.

It had seen the dragon’s pearl that rested within Cho Ryu Hyang’s dantian.

‘Hoh?’

Gongson Chun Gi looked inside Cho Ryu Hyang with an interested face.

Even he did not know what that round thing within Cho Ryu Hyang’s dantian was.

He had never seen it before.

But he could never imagine that the round object would be able to halt ‘its’ movement.

‘What is that?’

Gongson Chun Gi knew very well what ‘it’ was.

There was something that could stop ‘it’?

Inside his disciple, at that?

Gongson Chun Gi's eyes began to emit a hint of excitement.

While he was worried about his disciple being in pain, curiosity had still overtaken him.

He breathed slowly, gathered strength, and allowed 'it' to wait for its companion.

When the companion that traveled to the head came to the dantian, the two of them began to move slowly.

'They' circled the dantian slowly, then bit the dragon's pearl in the dantian with ferocity.

Right then.

Boom—!

'Eh?'

Gongson Chun Gi was surprised by the immense amount of force that was suddenly exerted onto his hands.

He almost flew backwards from that energy blast.

Even Gongson Chun Gi, who had removed the seals that restricted his power, was almost forced back.

He looked at his disciple with a dumb, shocked face for a moment, but then an immense change began in his disciple's body.

'They' got absorbed by the dragon's pearl in Cho Ryu Hyang's dantian.

'Ha..... Hahaha.....'

Humans can only laugh when they see something they never expected.

This was the case for Gognson Chun Gi.

After laughing for a bit, Gongson Chun Gi withdrew his arms.

He then put on the black bracelets he had prepared beforehand.

He was sealing his power again.

When his body became weak again due to having all his power sealed.

Cho Ryu Hyang opened his eyes.

A strange light shone upon Gongson Chun Gi's eyes right then.

“Oh? Who’s this?”

Cho Ryu Hyang frowned at Gongson Chun Gi and opened his mouth.

“You’re quite reckless.”

“It’s been a while, old man.....”

Zhuge Liang.

He was currently borrowing Cho Ryu Hyang’s body.

When Gongson Chun Gi raised his hand to greet Zhuge Liang with a gleeful face, Zhuge Liang looked around with eyes that emitted a faint purple light, and smirked.

“Just how much of a monster are you planning on turning this child into. You really are a greedy bastard who knows no satisfaction.”

“I don’t think you have the right to say that? By the way, what’s that thing in the boy’s dantian? It ate up the Shura Essence Crystal.”

Shura Essence Crystal.

It was basically a lump of energy that was created by condensing the energies of all the previous Popes of the church.

To think there would be something that could swallow something like that.

It could only make Gongson Chun Gi flabbergasted.

Cho Ryu Hyang, no, Zhuge Liang smiled arrogantly, and opened his mouth.

“It is the pearl of a dragon.”

“What?”

When Gongson Chun Gi made a dumbfounded face, Zhuge Liang spoke.

“I’d like to play with you a little longer..... but it is time for me to leave.”

Gongson Chun Gi frowned, and Zhuge Liang opened his mouth for the last time.

“This child will accomplish much in the future. I don’t care about what you’re trying to do, but don’t handle him too lightly. I’m telling you to stop treating him like a toy.”

After saying that, Zhuge Liang, no, Cho Ryu Hyang tipped backwards, unconscious.

Gongson Chun Gi grabbed onto Cho Ryu Hyang, and complained with an annoyed face.

“You’re running away after saying everything you wanted to say? And you don’t even deserve to say that to me in the first place.”

Gongson Chun Gi worried for Cho Ryu Hyang more than anyone.

But it wasn’t easy to just ignore Zhuge Liang’s advice just because of that.

“Annoying old man.”

He could only complain like so.

Chapter 78. Choosing Ranks

Cho Ryu Hyang looked down at his hands with a slight smile. There was a symbol that slightly resembled lightning imprinted on both of them, which signified that Cho Ryu Hyang had inherited the Shura Environment.

So in the end, he did acquire the Shura Environment. He managed to realize why he inherited it only after he actually got it.

The Shura Environment was completely different from any other martial art techniques. The user did not have to spend any time practicing and familiarizing himself with the technique. The power of the technique just changed according to the user's talent.

Cho Ryu Hyang's head already contained all the techniques and the stances of the Shura Environment.

What was surprising to him was that when he thought of the Shura Environment, the verses of the technique instantly rose in his mind, and just by thinking about them, he would be able to cultivate qi.

It was this simple? This was no different from having a cheat. The side effect that came with the technique seemed insignificant.

‘But.....’

What worried him was the fact that the Shura Environment

worked a little differently compared to what his teacher had told him.

Normally, the canine of the Ashura, the Shura Essence Crystal that would be embedded into the body, was what the user used to control the Shura Environment.

But in Cho Ryu Hyang's case, the Shura Environment was being controlled by his dantian. It was different compared to how the technique was normally used. Strangely enough, Gongson Chun Gi seemed to have great hopes about this.

–Perhaps this will help suppress the side effects of the Shura Environment.

Cho Ryu Hyang stood up as he thought of his teacher's words.

He learned the two techniques that were said to be the strongest in the world, the Moon Edge Blade Technique, and the Shura Environment. Now, he just had to become more experienced in using the two techniques.

He looked at the two men in front of him with shining eyes.

“My Lord, are you feeling alright?”

“Yes, I'm fine.”

Cho Ryu Hyang answered Un Hui's question, and turned to No Jin Nyung, who was sitting with a confident expression on his face.

“Are you ready?”

“Yes, My Lord.”

No Jin Nyung had been glancing at Un Hui for quite a while. Today, he would fix that bastard's rude attitude.

‘You're just easy prey.....’

The man didn't actually seem like an easy opponent. But No Jin Nyung didn't think he'd lose. That was enough.

There were obviously power differences when it came to Harmonious experts. But when it came to Un Hui and No Jin Nyung, that power difference was tiny.

‘I'll punish him.’

Unlike No Jin Nyung, who was thinking of taking down Un Hui and taking him in as a minion, Un Hui was looking at Cho Ryu Hyang without really thinking anything.

Cho Ryu Hyang had set up a time to let Un Hui and No Jin Nyung see who was stronger.

‘I have high expectations for this match.’

Cho Ryu Hyang touched his glasses, and gulped.

Harmonious experts were humans that exceeded human limits. As a fight between them was quite rare to behold, Cho Ryu Hyang was very excited.

This would be something beneficial to watch for Cho Ryu Hyang. Cho Ryu Hyang set up a seat far away from his subordinates.

This was a fight between harmonious experts. If he didn’t distance himself enough, he would be swept away.

Un Hui and No Jin Nyung began to intensely glare at each other once Cho Ryu Hyang settled down.

After quite some time, No Jin Nyung rushed at Un Hui.



Sunwu Cho Rin was looking in front of her with a pout. In front of her was Gongson Chun Gi, who was looking through various documents with a tired face.

‘I’m tired.’

Gongson Chun Gi massaged his shoulders subconsciously. It’s only been a day since he passed on the Shura Environment.

He was exhausted, but he couldn’t rest. There was a lot he had to do, due to the church’s expansion into Sichuan.

“Why aren’t you leaving? Are you that free?”

When Gongson Chun Gi said this, the awkward air between the two got a lot heavier. Sunwu Cho Rin, who had been staying quiet till now, opened her mouth.

“.....Are you serious about this? You will truly let her get out into the martial world?”

“Yeah, I told you. That’s exactly what I’m going to do.”

Sunwu Cho Rin frowned.

This wasn’t right. Wasn’t this too risky a decision? Sunwu Cho Rin opened her mouth.

“We won’t be free enough to protect the young master. The martial alliance will definitely keep us busy. If someone who can’t fight comes along with us on the trip, it would hinder us greatly.”

Gongson Chun Gi finally looked up from the documents he was working on.

He put his two hands on the table, clasped them, and tucked them under his chin. He opened his mouth.

“Hey, cutie.”

“Yes, Your Holiness.”

“Can’t you see I’m busy?”

“What?”

“Are you going to keep annoying me with the decision I made already?”

“B, but.....”

“Eh? Seeing how you’re talking back to me, you must be prepared to stake your life on this matter, right? Or do I just seem like that easy of a target?”

It was a playful voice. But Sunwu Cho Rin could not bring herself to smile.

Instead, she felt like she was struck by a bucket of cold water. Who was the person in front of her? It was the Pope himself.

No matter how laid back he was, he was still a man who held absolute power in the church. He wasn’t a person she could go on arguing with.

When she realized this, Sunwu Cho Rin immediately bowed down. She felt cold sweat run down her back.

Even if the Pope was usually very friendly and playful, one must never forget about his actual status.

He was like the sun in the sky, the living god of the Heavenly Demon Church.

“I was foolish. Please forgive me.....”

“Tch.”

Gongson Chun Gi clicked his tongue, and leaned back on his chair. He was tired. But there were a ton of documents he had to look at.

He was already exhausted with such things, and when someone came to argue with a decision he had already made, he would simply get extremely annoyed, and no one would really get anywhere. It was just a waste of time.

But Gongson Chun Gi still had to explain his decision carefully to the dissatisfied subordinate.

‘Should I just give up on the Sichuan operation?’

After thinking over this matter carefully for a bit, Gongson Chun Gi smirked, and opened his mouth.

“Hey, cutie.”

“Yes, Your Holiness.”

“I know how much you treasure my daughter. And I’m very thankful for that. Because of this, I’ll just ignore your rude attitude from before.”

“.....Thank you.”

“And about the thing you’re worried about, it’s actually something you don’t really have to worry about at all.”

Sometimes, one had to take his time to explain things to his subordinate. Gongson Chun Gi knew that well.

Sunwu Cho Rin made a complicated face. She wasn’t sure of what Gongson Chun Gi meant.

“I’m planning on sticking the strongest bodyguard next to her.”

“Ah.....”

Did the Pope have any spare soldiers available?

‘It should’ve been obvious.’

Was he planning to move his own bodyguards? Or did he have a different plan?

Gongson Chun Gi was someone who treasured his daughter more than his own body. There was no way that he'd send his daughter on such a dangerous mission without even thinking about it.

'It would've been better if he told me that in advance, though.....'

When Sunwu Cho Rin made a regretsul expression, Gongson Chun Gi glared at Sunwu Cho Rin for a bit, then opened his mouth with a lazy expression.

"You're misunderstanding something here, aren't you?"

"What?"

"I'm not planning on expending someone else as her bodyguard. The number of people going into this mission isn't going to change."

What? Then who was going to be Gongson Ahri's bodyguard? Gongson Chun Gi answered this question immediately.

"Cho Ryu Hyang. I'm planning on putting him next to Ahri. She'd be safe that way."

".....!"

"This mission will continue for at least a few years. After all, it

won't be easy to set a solid foundation in Sichuan. During that time, my daughter and Cho Ryu Hyang would naturally have a lot of encounters together, and will get close to each other. This would be good for both me and Ahri in the long term.”

This was what Gongson Chun Gi wanted. But this was far from what Sunwu Cho Rin wanted.

She couldn't give Ahri to anyone. That was how she felt. Right then, Gongson Chun Gi calmly opened his mouth.

“I know how you think of Ahri. And I'm thankful for that. No matter who the subject is, love is something one should be thankful for, after all.”

“.....!”

Sunwu Cho Rin's face grew pale. She didn't hold just simple affection for Gongson Ahri.

Did the Pope notice that? Didn't she hide her feelings quite well? She needed to come up with an excuse. She needed to tell Gongson Chun Gi that this was just a misunderstanding.

Before she even managed to say anything, Gongson Chun Gi opened his mouth.

“Just watch her from the sidelines like you always have. This is what you must do.”

“.....”

Tik–

Sunwu Cho Rin felt something snap in her chest. While she was standing dumbly on the spot, Gongson Chun Gi spoke again.

“You should know as well, that this would be the best thing we could do for Ahri. After all, you’re someone I chose personally.”

He was giving her a chance. A chance to pick everything back up.

After trembling for a little bit, Sunwu Cho Rin became calm again. She had stopped trembling quickly, but there was something quite heavy weighing in her mind.

But she still had to answer the Pope’s question. There was only one thing she could say here.

“I will take your advice and treasure it. Thank you for your generosity.”

Gongson Chun Gi made a defeated face after looking at Sunwu Cho Rin for a bit.

“Cutie.”

“Yes, Your Holiness.”

“Don’t be too disappointed with my words. This was something I had to do some day anyway, and it’s a request from me as a father, not the Pope.”

“Yes.”

She knew. After all, Sunwu Cho Rin knew what type of a person Gongson Chun Gi was. She smiled faintly because of that.

After looking at her sad smile for a bit, Gongson Chun Gi turned his attention back to his documents. This wasn’t a very enjoyable experience for him either.

“Get going. You should be busy, too, right?”

“Understood.”

After saying farewell to the Pope and getting out, Sunwu Cho Rin lost her balance and leaned against a wall.

She calmed herself after a bit, and bit her lips.

‘Nothing changes.’

Right. Nothing changes. Sunwu Cho Rin still liked Gongson Ahri. It wasn't like she wanted to get anything out of that.

It was just that having her feelings discovered by someone made her feel confused.

‘Right, that’s it.’

She would keep observing Gongson Ahri quietly from the sidelines, and be with her at all times. That would be enough. She had always thought that this would be the way everything would play out.

But when she was faced with the fact that there would be someone else other than her standing next to Gongson Ahri in the future, she became pained.

‘Cho Ryu Hyang.....’

That strange child. He was someone who exceeded her expectations right in their first meeting. But that child was the Heir. He was qualified to be next to Gongson Ahri.

He was the second most powerful being next to the Pope in the church. Sunwu Cho Rin bit her fingernail with a cold gaze.

‘I want him to disappear.’

She was prepared to see someone else other than her with Gongson Ahri, but she didn't want it to happen now. After thinking a bit, Sunwu Cho Rin's eyes sparkled.

‘They wanted a chance, didn't they?’

The thing the four families wanted was a chance. A single chance.

They wanted a chance to assassinate the Heir. Sunwu Cho Rin was originally uninterested in this matter, but not now.

Cho Ryu Hyang had gained a new enemy without knowing it himself.

Chapter 79. The Result Of Carelessness

“Hoh? This seems interesting.”

Cho Ryu Hyang turned his head when he heard a familiar voice behind him.

He could see a smiling Gongson Chun Gi when he did so.

Cho Ryu Hyang saw his teacher's smile, and spoke calmly.

“You're here?”

“Yeah. I had some time, so I decided to come over. Ugh, seriously, my subordinates work me to death, I swear.”

Cho Ryu Hyang smiled a little, and thought to himself.

‘As expected..... he didn't notice.’

When one comprehends the Moon Edge Blade Technique, the user's senses become heightened.

Cho Ryu Hyang could feel everything around him just by closing his eyes.

But in front of teacher, his powers could be said to be nothing.

A person who surpassed everything.

The one person who everyone in the church admired.

This was Gongson Chun Gi, the strongest man in the world, Cho Ryu Hyang's teacher.

“So, who do you think will win?”

When his teacher, who decided to take a comfortable seat right next to Cho Ryu Hyang, asked a question, Cho Ryu Hyang made a serious face.

To Cho Ryu Hyang, who didn't know much about martial arts so far, the martial prowess of the two seemed to be the same.

‘But.....’

Cho Ryu Hyang thought a bit, then turned to Un Hui.

The Faultless View of The World.

He could see that Un Hui was clearly stronger than No Jin Nyung with that.

Gongson Chun Gi nodded when he followed Cho Ryu Hyang's

gaze.

“Did you see that with your Godly Eyes?”

“Yes.”

“You saw well. That thing’s pretty useful, isn’t it?”

Gongson Chun Gi took out a fruit from his clothing, and handed it to Cho Ryu Hyang.

“But then again, Un Hui wouldn’t be able to win that easily.”

Crunch–

When Cho Ryu Hyang took a bite out of the fruit in his hand and nodded, Gongson Chun Gi spoke.

“With such a small power difference, the one who uses more petty tricks would be the one to lose. They should both know about that. That’d mean that both of them would have to go all out..... No Jin Nyung is more suited for doing that.”



The moment after Gongson Chun Gi finished talking, No Jin Nyung made his move.

It was an explosive movement.

After closing in instantly, No Jin Nyung stepped on the ground with great force, then kicked upwards.

“Ora!”

Kwang–!

The foot that was on the ground, the balancing foot.

The strength contained in that foot alone was so great, the ground cracked and broke to pieces in an instant.

It was a simple movement that did not contain any profound techniques, or tricks hidden inside.

But because of that fact, the strike contained the nonsensical power that No Jin Nyung had in his body.

Un Hui observed No Jin Nyung's attack quietly, then dodged the strike with minimal movement and closed in on No Jin Nyung.

He had dodged No Jin Nyung's attack with a hair's breadth.

It was something that couldn't be done if one did not have confidence of winning.

When No Jin Nyung saw Un Hui's move, he smiled in glee.

'I win!'

No Jin Nyung specialized in close combat.

In other words, he was most skilled in unarmed combat.

Because he had no weapons, the skills he could show when he

gets closer to his opponent would become more complex and versatile.

Like now.

‘Eat this.’

He didn’t know why Un Hui was trying to get close to him, to be honest.

No, he wasn’t even interested in what Un Hui was thinking.

He would never lose in close combat.

Knowing that much was enough, wasn’t it?

No Jin Nyung did not try to take back his kick. Instead, he used that foot as an axis, and made a large turn mid-air.

Midair spin kick.

It was the Spinning Wind Kick (旋風脚).

When Cho Ryu Hyang saw this, a small gleam of amazement appeared in his eyes.

‘It’s natural.’

The first attack had failed.

But the moves that followed the first attack didn't have any awkward movements in it.

It was almost as if No Jin Nyung had expected the first move to fail.

Right then, Gongson Chun Gi, who was watching the battle with Cho Ryu Hyang, clicked his tongue.

“He's an impatient one.”

Who was he referring to?

Before Cho Ryu Hyang could even think more, Un Hui made his move.

‘I saw that guy's movements in the past.’

Un Hui looked at No Jin Nyung with calm eyes, then moved his body like a tree branch swaying in the face of a strong wind.

Vuun—!

The sound of the wind in his ear was quite fierce.

But Un Hui had already gotten out of the range of No Jin Nyung's attack with just this movement.

‘Just once.’

He had seen No Jin Nyung's kick once, when Cho Ryu Hyang fought No Jin Nyung. That was enough.

From just that one kick he saw in the past, Un Hui was able to analyze the fighting style, and read No Jin Nyung's movements.

Un Hui.

He was a genius of martial arts, as well as an expert of the harmonious stage.

A small glint of light appeared from Un Hui's sleeve, and a dagger slid out.

It was Un Hui's most favored weapon.

The Small Crimson Sword (丹紅小劍).

Paa—!

A small red light appeared from the dagger that streaked through

the air.

No Jin Nyung frowned, and jumped back.

“You.....”

No Jin Nyung ground his teeth, as he limped.

His entire foot was a bloody mess.

Un Hui had cut apart just the skin, avoiding all the muscles on No Jin Nyung’s leg.

Un Hui decided not to attack. Instead, he began to talk.

“I could’ve taken your entire foot.”

Un Hui was suggesting that they stop there.

There was no point in fighting any more than this.

No Jin Nyung ground his teeth.

He couldn’t refute Un Hui’s words.

But wasn’t it too unfair to just end a battle like this?

‘I became careless.’

He didn’t think about what weapon un Hui used.

He should’ve assumed that Un Hui used daggers when the man closed in on him.

‘But even so, he actually managed to pierce the Heavenly Demon Technique?’

The dagger seemed to be quite precious.

His leg was trained to the point of being able to crush steel with just pure strength.

The dagger was able to cut through No Jin Nyung’s leg like tofu. That dagger was definitely not normal.

No Jin Nyung bit his teeth.

“If you can take this one strike, I’ll admit defeat.”

His pride prevented him from admitting defeat.

Un Hui frowned.

“We have to move out into Sichuan tomorrow. You are aware of this, right?”

“I know, I know!”

He knew.

And this was why both of them held back in the fight.

He wasn't going to hold back this time, though.

Kugugu—!

A violent, domineering force exploded out of No Jin Nyung's body.

He was going all out.

Un Hui's face stiffened when he saw this.

If No Jin Nyung attacked with this much power, both of them weren't going to get out of this battle without a minor injury, regardless of who one.

Un Hui took a glance at Cho Ryu Hyang.

Cho Ryu Hyang seemed to be concerned as well.

Normally, he'd stop the fight immediately.

It would be bad if even one of them got heavily injured, after all.

But if he stopped No Jin Nyung here, No Jin Nyung would surely have negative feelings about both Un Hui and Cho Ryu Hyang in the future.

‘What should I do?’

What was the best course of action here?

What would bring out the best results?

While Cho Ryu Hyang was thinking about such things.

Gongson Chun Gi ruffled Cho Ryu Hyang's hair, and whispered into his ear.

“The first thing you always have to do when doing just about anything is to set a standard for yourself when making a decision. The second most important thing would be to rank the priority of your possible choices based on that standard. Third, you need to have the strength to be able to carry out your decision with confidence. If you hesitate, the people who follow you will also hesitate. Always remember that.”

Cho Ryu Hyang touched his glasses, and nodded.

His teacher was right. He needed to act with more responsibility.

In the future, countless lives will be affected by his decisions.

Cho Ryu Hyang quickly analyzed what was going on in his head.

He made his decision.

“Stop there.”

No Jin Nyung frowned.

Cho Ryu Hyang had walked between him and Un Hui.

He then looked straight at No Jin Nyung, who had a discontent look on his face.

No Jin Nyung did not avoid Cho Ryu Hyang's gaze.

He was angered.

Cho Ryu Hyang looked straight at No Jin Nyung's eyes filled with rage, and spoke calmly.

“You lost.”

“But.....”

“Saying that you got careless won’t work here. In a real fight, you would’ve lost your leg.”

“.....”

“Trying to continue battling here would mean that you are trying to use the fact that this isn’t a real fight as an excuse to cover up the fact that you lost.”

No Jin Nyung’s eyes trembled.

He was careless.

Right, he could admit that. Because he was a little rushed, he made a mistake.

But the results of the battle couldn’t be decided just because of that.

He couldn’t accept his loss based on such a nonsensically quick battle.

“Accepting your loss will definitely aid you in your growth in the

future. And you'll have many chances to compete for higher rankings in the future, anyway."

"Chances?"

"Right. You'll have a lot of it as long as you stay with me."

Cho Ryu Hyang looked at No Jin Nyung, who seemed to get a lot more calmer, and smiled.

"I'll go through many dangers in the future. Try to prove your worth to me during those times. the ranks between you two will be decided based on that. The ranking right now is only temporary."

"Temporary....."

No Jin Nyung's stiffened face began to turn into a happy one.

After seeing this, Cho Ryu Hyang turned to Un Hui.

"You were lucky."

"Yes."

Un Hui didn't try to deny it.

He was lucky.

That was the best way to describe the current situation.

The fact that he saw No Jin Nyung's moves beforehand helped him quite a bit.

He knew about No Jin Nyung's technique, and what No Jin Nyung specialized in.

Knowing that made a huge difference.

Gongson Chun Gi, who was observing the battle between the two, stepped forward.

"You guys are playing quite nicely."

Un Hui and No Jin Nyung bowed down to Gongosn Chun Gi.

After acknowledging their greetings lightly, Gongson Chun Gi opened his mouth.

"I didn't know of it before, but it seems that there are quite a lot of violent children roaming Sichuan."

Violent Children?

When Cho Ryu Hyang made a confused face, Gongson Chun Gi

opened his mouth with a smile.

“It’s the Nanman Beast Gate, and the North Sea Ice Palace.”

These were names that Cho Ryu Hyang didn’t know about.

No Jin Nyung seemed to not know much about as well, and turned to Un Hui with a curious face.

Un Hui had a very concerned look on his face when No Jin Nyung turned.

“.....Could it be that the foreign powers made their move?”

“Right. It looks like those guys are quite interested in our work. It’s pretty annoying.”

It wasn’t just annoying.

Un Hui, who knew just how much strength the foreign powers possessed, became extremely worried.

“Go prepare yourself. Unlike the martial alliance, these guys are actually dangerous, so you’ll have to be careful.”

“Understood.”

Cho Ryu Hyang looked at Un Hui's stiff face, and realized that his opponents might be stronger than he initially thought.

But as he didn't know the specifics of the entire situation, he wasn't too concerned about it.

Right then, Gongson Chun Gi pat Cho Ryu Hyang's hair, and spoke.

"Two months. Defend yourself for two months once you arrive in Sichuan. Can you do it?"

Cho Ryu hyang smiled.

His head already felt like bursting because of the Martial Alliance and the enemies within the church.

He had to consider the foreign powers as well, now?

He could only smile when he thought about this.

'Come to think of it, I became really expensive, didn't I.'

Right.

When he came back to his senses, his body had become extremely expensive.

How much was he worth right now?

Cho Ryu Hyang looked down at his body when he thought this, and readjusted his glasses.

Like always, his teacher expected quite a lot from him.

“I’ll have to do it, even if I can’t.”

It was a response that had a bit of tiredness mixed into it.

But it also contained hints of confidence in it.

Gongson Chun Gi grinned when he heard this.

“Don’t die. That’s how you win.”

“I’ll live on, no matter what happens.”

“Keke, that’s the attitude.”

Gongson Chun Gi laughed as he pinched Cho Ryu Hyang’s cheeks lightly.

“The mainland you lived in in the past, and the mainland you

will move into now will be completely different. Keep staying focused. As long as you do that, you won't have many problems."

Cho Ryu Hyang didn't know what exactly would be different, but nodded anyway.

"I can promise you one thing, though."

"What is it?"

"It'll be really interesting. Sichuan, that is. Hehehe....."

Gongson Chun Gi let out a toothy grin as he spoke.

Cho Ryu Hyang became nervous when he saw this.

Things always became really tiresome when teacher smiled like this.

'I must be imagining things.....'

Cho Ryu Hyang really hoped that he was only imagining things.

Chapter 80. Expansion Into Mainland

Sichuan Castle (四川省).

As the name implied, this was an area where four rivers flowed.

Because of this reason, the area got the name Sichuan, and this was where the kingdom of Shu, created by the famous Liu Bei, started.

Many kingdoms have come and gone after the Shu kingdom, and the times had changed.

In the flow of time, even the city of Sichuan, which was affiliated with the martial world, was about to change.

For the Alliance,

And the Heavenly Demon Church, the city of Sichuan was a very important place, the place that would change the future of the church.

“In order to help transport fifty oxen-carts and thirty horse carriages from the Heavenly Demon Church, the armed escort company dispatched up to two hundred third-class guards, one hundred second-class guards, thirty first-class guards, and two special-class guards. We did not bring any carriers, due to the fact that they may get in the way of the mission.”

The boy who was listening to the report.

He had a loose black uniform on his body.

But his clothes actually had a golden dragon imprinted on it, a sign of an emperor.

The boy, Cho Ryu Hyang, was inside the giant, overbearing six-horse carriage, reading the report while fiddling with his glasses.

“Escort Jeon.”

“Yes, sir.”

Jeon Wi (電位).

He was one of the only two special-class escorts in the Gray Heaven Armed Escort Company, and the administrator of the entire mission. From a while back, he had been looking at Cho Ryu Hyang with an astounded face.

‘Amazing.’

It’s already been ten days since they left the church.

During this time, Cho Ryu Hyang checked reports daily, found out anything that had changed, and always asked others to fix

mistakes whenever he found one.

If there was a slight mistake in calculations, he asked his subordinates to fix that as well.

This was very troubling for those who worked under him, but since this meant that Cho Ryu Hyang was an expert when it came to things like this, they did not complain.

This was good.

‘I had heard that the son of the president was quite talented in the past, but.....’

He had known that the phrase ‘a nail in the pocket can only stick out’ (meaning: talented people are destined to be noticed.) was being used in the company to describe Cho Ryu Hyang.

But he had only thought that Cho Ryu Hyang was only a bit talented.

To think he would have become the heir of the church....

Wasn’t this a quite a big event?

This was why Jeon Wi’s face was full of admiration and amazement.

“Our people don’t really need escorts anyway. It would be better to bring all the escorts to the front as scouts instead.”

“Understood.”

Jeon Wi was looking at Cho Ryu Hyang, who was giving him various orders, proudly.

“As you might already know, the people from the church aren’t weak. So please direct all your attention into protecting the goods, not the people, in case we get attacked.”

“Understood.”

Jeon Wi nodded.

He knew.

Although this was only a ‘advance party’, the power of it was truly terrifying.....

‘One of the ten divisions within the Heavenly Demon Church.....’

The Ruling Fire House.

One of the ten great military divisions of the church was making

its move.

The fact that one of the ten divisions were moving was surprising already, but the fact that made Jeon Wi even more surprised was the fact that the martial artists of the Ruling Fire House were all ‘women’.

But Jeon Wi was unable to look down on these women.

‘Sunwu Cho Rin, was it?’

She was a woman of unparalleled beauty.

But when Jeon Wi looked at her in the eye, he was assaulted with a feeling that resembled that of a predator looking at its prey.

‘She was definitely a peak expert.’

Her beauty didn’t even come into his eyes.

Even if they were both peak experts, the power difference between them was quite large.

The difference between a fifty year old man like him, and a twenty year old girl, was much too large.

‘As expected of the Heavenly Demon Church.’

Sunwu Cho Rin was an expert who was nearing the Harmonious stage.

And the female experts of the Ruling Fire House were all at least second-rate warriors, if not first-rate.

There were a few in the peak stage as well.

Jeon Wi kept glancing at Sunwu Cho Rin as he talked with Cho Ryu Hyang.

Beauty and power.

She lacked none.

And his first impression of her was imprinted very strongly in his mind.

–Look down, bitch.

This truly gave Jeon Wi a strong first impression of this woman.

After this event, Jeon Wi did not even dare get close to the people from the church.

Cho Ryu Hyang read the report from Jeon Wi, stamped it, and

looked out the window.

It was almost winter.

The cold wind outside was already seeping into the carriage.

Cho Ryu Hyang quickly closed the doors, and spoke.

“Let’s go.”

“Understood.”

When the door closed, the carriage began to move.

Soon, it began to run through the mountain path with extreme speed.

They had to move like this for ten more days in order to reach Sichuan.

Cho Ryu Hyang looked outside the window at the rough mountain path for a bit, and realized that he might not be able to go back anymore.

He could only smile bitterly.

Just a while ago, he was studying math at an academy.

He never could imagine that he'd lead a life like this.

But within a period of a single year, too much had changed in his life.

‘When will they attack?’

He trusted Un Hui, who was on top of the carriage, and No Jin Nyung, who was driving the carriage.

They were both Harmonious experts.

Weaklings wouldn't even be able to dream of attacking them.

But the problem didn't lay in these weaklings.

The real problem lay with those who lied and mingled amongst them.

How long could Cho Ryu Hyang last against them?

They would definitely attack Cho Ryu Hyang with strange tactics.

‘I'm thinking too much.’

Cho Ryu Hyang realized he was thinking too negatively, and shook his head.

He won't die.

There were too many things he didn't accomplish yet.

He couldn't die just yet.

There were too many things he did not even manage to do yet.

He couldn't die.

Cho Ryu Hyang clenched his fists.

It didn't matter what happened to him.

Moving into the mainland just meant that he was getting closer to 'him'.

'Yu Sul Bin.....'

The Wudang Sect.

He had never forgotten about the man from that sect.

In the past, he could only suffer from that man's hands due to his lack of power, but not this time.

He would take care of the anger in his heart with his own strength.

While he was thinking of such things.

Knock knock–

Somebody knocked the door of the moving carriage.

Cho Ryu Hyang had known that someone was approaching from the beginning.

Due to the 'area' that was created thanks to the Moon Edge Blade Technique, he was able to notice people who were approaching him from a certain distance.

“Who is it?”

“The young lady wishes to come in.”

He must be talking about Gongson Ahri.

After thinking a bit, Cho Ryu Hyang opened his mouth.

“Does she have a request?”

“Looks like it.”

After thinking some more, Cho Ryu Hyang sighed and opened his mouth.

“Alright. Tell her to come in.”

“I’ll bring her in.”

Cho Ryu Hyang fell in deep thought as Sunwu Cho Rin walked away.

He remembered what his teacher told him when he realized that Gongosn Ahri would follow him in this dangerous trip.

–Do you like an idiotic woman, or a smart one?

Cho Ryu Hyang was confused.

Why would his teacher suddenly talk about a woman at a time like this?

Also, wasn’t he too young to even think about such things?

When he made a confused face for a moment, his teacher grinned

and spoke some more.

–So you’re just into pretty girls?

When Cho Ryu Hyang made a complicated face, due to the fact that he did not even know what was going on, Gongson Chun Gi tapped the armrests on his chair and spoke.

–There’s a girl as white as paper. Well, you’ll see that she has quite a lot of perks about her as you spend more time with her, but ‘for now’, the biggest perk she has is the fact that she is a clean sheet of paper. Would you like to try drawing on that piece of paper?

Cho Ryu Hyang didn’t know what his teacher was talking about at first.

He only managed to realize what his teacher meant when he heard Gongson Ahri would be accompanying him on the trip.

When he realized this, he blushed without realizing it.

And he began thinking to himself,

“Teacher, aren’t you being too blunt?”

Right.

His teacher was being too blunt.

That made him uncomfortable.

This actually made him turn away from Gongson Ahri more than usual.

He had avoided her for ten days by making up random excuses.

Gongson Ahri probably noticed that something was going on by now.

‘I don’t have time for her.’

No, this wasn’t just for Gongson Ahri. This applied to everyone.

Plus, he was too young to think about such things.....

While Cho Ryu Hyang was thinking about such things.

Somebody knocked on the doors.

Knock knock–

When Cho Ryu Hyang opened the doors of the carriage, the cold wind of winter struck the interior of the carriage like a storm.

Whoo–

The sound of Cho Ryu Hyang's surroundings suddenly got much louder when he instinctively scrunched up his eyes.

Clack, clack–

Thump, thump–

The sound of the horses running, and the carriages shaking rang clearly in his ears.

Right then, he could see Gongson Ahri, who was smiling brightly while sitting on Sunwu Cho Rin's horse, came into his eyes.



Thump–

His eyes then moved onto the golden hair that shone in the bright sunlight.

‘This is.....’

Cho Ryu Hyang stared at Gongson Ahri with a dumb face for a moment.

What was in front of him just seemed too unreal at the moment.

Right then, Gongson Ahri’s mouth opened up to reveal her white

teeth, and a clear voice flowed out from it.

“The view from a horse is much better than looking outside from the carriage!”

“.....”

How should he respond?

Cho Ryu Hyang thought a bit, and leaned forward outside the carriage a little bit.

Then, the strong wind lashed out at Cho Ryu Hyang’s body full force.

Dudududu–

Cho Ryu Hyang frowned as he felt the carriage shake beneath his feet.

He felt strange when he looked at Gongson Ahri.

‘I thought she was an angel.’

The thought rose up in his head all of the sudden.

Cho Ryu Hyang became surprised by his own thought, and

looked at Gongson Ahri strangely.

“He should be really confused by now.”

“What?”

“No, I just thought of my disciple for a second. Don’t worry about me.”

Jeon Bak and Sunwu Jo Duk became confused.

They didn’t understand why the Pope was grinning all of the sudden.

But since the Pope did things like this all the time, they quietly went back to checking documents.

They still had plenty of work to do.

Gongson Chun Gi just kept smiling evilly, as if he found something funny.

“My dear disciple, at times like this, you lose as soon as you become aware of her. Would he have noticed by now?”

He didn't tell Gongson Ahri anything.

But he had purposefully thrown several things to Cho Ryu Hyang to make the boy nervous.

He was wondering what his smart disciple would think about his words, and once the boy realized what he meant, the boy would keep thinking about it without realizing it.

And making his disciple just think about such things would be enough for Gongson Chun Gi.

“Now... what kind of a picture are you planning on drawing, my disciple?”

Gongson Chun Gi worked while laughing to himself for the rest of the day.

Chapter 81. The Worries Of The Alliance

“Just what is the Beggar’s Sect planning on doing about this matter?”

“Hah? I came here to ask you that question. What the heck am I supposed to do if you ask me the same question?”

The master of the Sichuan division of the Beggar’s Sect.

In other words, the one who administrated everything that happened in Sichuan, Wi Gul Gae, looked at the four people in front of him with an annoyed face.

The four experts who were looking at each other with troubled faces.

They were the leaders of the major powers in the Sichuan area.

Diancang Sect, Emei Sect, Qingcheng Sect, and the Sichuan Tang Clan.

They were the masters of those powers.

But their faces, that were usually filled with pride and confidence, were currently filled with worries and troubles.

“Did the Tai God Beggar not say anything?”

“What use is there in trying to find an old man? The Tai God Beggar gave up getting involved in any matters related to the alliance after we got completely crushed in the war. There’s no use in trying to find him.”

When Wi Gul Gae said this with a bored face, the master of the Qingchang Sect, and the one known as the Ten Thousand Qing Wind Sword, Qing Song Ja, stroked his white beard, and spoke with an annoyed face.

“You should know how strong the Heavenly Demon Sect is! Please, help us. The beggar’s sect should help out in matters like this, should they not?”

The Heavenly Demon Church made its move into Sichuan.

Unlike in the past, they were telling the entire world about this matter, as if they were going to parade into Sichuan.

There was no way to stop them, however.

That made the sects located in Sichian very afraid.

Wi Gul Gae looked at Qing Song Ja’s face calmly, then sighed.

“I’ll be honest, since you’re being so desperate. Even if us beggars get into the fight, just what would change? We’re weak, and we

complain a lot..... We just have numbers. That's why we're going to make a run for it when we can."

"....."

The four experts lost their words when they heard this.

The Alliance valued justice and camaraderie. Saying something like this was almost heretical.

Wi Gul Gae smiled after looking at the ridiculous faces of the experts, then sat down on his chair.

"If you're trying to get the Beggar's Sect to make its move, it's better to give up. We have no power to help you. No, even if we did, we wouldn't help. They're scared. The beggars in the sect are just observing what's going on fearfully."

".....You're still very honest, I see."

The master of the Emei Sect.

When Godly Monk Gyu Min smoke this with a disappointed voice, Wi Gul Gae shrugged, and opened his mouth.

"Do you mind if I keep on being honest?"

“Please do so.”

When the master of the Sichuan Tang Clan, Tang Mun Hyup said this, Wi Gul Gae began talking.

“Don’t look lightly at the fact that the Heavenly Demon Church is making its move. You may have expected this as well, but this is a serious move made by that demon, Gongson Chun Gi. Do you mind if I give you a serious advice to you right now?”

“.....What is it?”

Wi Gul Gae took a sip from a bottle strapped to his hip, while Tang Mun Hyup looked at him a little uncomfortably.

“The best thing we can do at this point is to get as far away as we can from this damn place/”

“.....Amitabha.”

Just at the point when everyone grew fearful.

The master of the Diancang Sect, the one known to be the Worrying Light Sword, Man Suk Ja, sighed and spoke.

“Amitayus..... It’s not like this would be solved if we run, correct? Isn’t it better to help?” (無量壽佛)

Wi Gul Gae stopped drinking alcohol from the bottle in his hand, and wiped his mouth.

“Half a year. One if it’s late. After that point, something will definitely change.”

“Half to one year.....”

When everyone made a dark face.

“If we hold on till then, the world will change.”

“Can we believe that?”

“That’s your choice, not mine.”

Everyone made a serious face when they heard this.

Tang Mun Hyup, who was thinking quietly for a bit, opened his mouth.

“Is this the conclusion you made yourself?”

Wi Gul Gae paused, and looked at the man who spoke.

He faintly smiled.

‘As expected of Tang Mun Hyup.....’

The master of the Sichuan Tang Clan was staring at him with a serious face.

Wi Gul Gae did not avoid the man’s gaze as he responded.

“This is the conclusion that the Beggar’s Sect..... No, the Alliance reached.”

Everyone’s worried faces lightened a little when they heard this.

Like this, the response to the movement of the Heavenly Demon Church has been decided.

Sunwu Cho Rin had been looking at the carriage with a complicated face for a while.

Shw was looking at the carriage where Cho Ryu Hyang and Gongson Ahri was.

‘Damn child.’

Sunwu Cho Rin thought of Cho Ryu Hyang in her mind, and sighed.

The look Cho Ryu Hyang gave Gongson Ahri a moment ago.

Sunwu Cho Rin knew that face of Cho Ryu Hyang's very well.

'To think I'd witness someone fall in love.....'

The boy's face was similar to those that men gave her, but somewhat different.

It was a little warmer? Softer?

That was the impression she got from Cho Ryu Hyang's eyes.

'You must be kidding me.'

Even so, she couldn't hand over Gongson Ahri.

How much did she treasure the girl till now?

But she was still a little bit worried for some reason.

Sunwu Cho Rin had been looking at the carriage intently from a while back.

She was doing her best to pick up any sounds from the carriage.

‘Damn it, why’d they build the carriage so well?!’

The carriage was built strongly, as it was made for the heir himself.

Thanks to that, the carriage blocked sound very well, which prevented Sunwu Cho Rin from hearing anything.

This made her annoyed.

Cho Ryu Hyang breathed deeply as he sat down facing Gongson Ahri.

‘I made a mistake.’

Did he show his emotions by any chance?

He didn’t want to admit it, but he probably did.

After all, he clearly felt his heart shake for a moment.

Cho Ryu Hyang was very disappointed with himself.

His heart was shaken simply because of a person’s external

appearance.

While Cho Ryu Hyang was being disappointed with himself, Gongson Ahri looked in the carriage, and opened her mouth.

“So this was what father told me that he was making.”

Cho Ryu Hyang came back to his senses, and nodded.

“I believe teacher did indeed put some effort into making this.”

What Gongson Chun Gi talked proudly about before the trip was this carriage.

It wasn't even possible to pierce the external parts of the carriage with a normal expert's arrow, or qi.

Since it was built using the famous Hardened Black Trees from Nanman, it would be able to withstand blows from even a first-rate expert.

“I have something that father requested me to give you before we arrive.”

Cho Ryu Hyang's eyes brightened.

Something from Gongson Chun Gi?

Why'd his teacher give it to Gongson Ahri, not him?

He felt that this was a part of Gongson Chun Gi's prank, but he decided to not think about that for now.

Cho Ryu Hyang stuck his hand out to Gongson Chun Gi.

"I'd like to have a look at it."

"Right, please give me a moment."

Gongson Ahri took out a small box from her clothes.

When she took it out, Cho Ryu Hyang immediately felt annoyed.

'What is it?'

He felt a sense of rejection just by looking at the box.

Since he never felt something like this before, Cho Ryu Hyang made a troubled face.

Right then, Gongson Ahri handed the box to Cho Ryu Hyang.

"Open it."

“What’s inside?”

“I don’t know. But father told me to have you open it yourself.”

That was what his teacher said? There was no need to reject it, then.

Cho Ryu Hyang licked his lips.

They were getting dry for some reason.

He took off the lock on the box, and opened it.

Squirm–

Cho Ryu Hyang could feel something move in his stomach, right when he confirmed what was inside the box.

At the same time, Cho Ryu Hyang stepped backwards rapidly.

‘Eh? Why?’

He didn’t know why.

It was a bracelet.

There were just two black bracelets in the box, but he felt rejection towards it for some reason.

He began to sweat profusely.

“What’s going on? Is there anything wrong?”

“.....”



Cho Ryu Hyang did not respond, but instead glared at the box from the corner of the carriage.

To be more specific, he was looking at the black bracelets.

‘What are those? And the things that are moving inside my body.....’

If Cho Ryu Hyang’s memory served correctly, this was the power of the Shura Environment.

Right now, that power was desperately trying to escape his body.

While Cho Ryu Hyang was being quite confused, Gongson Ahri clapped her hands, as if she just remembered something.

“Ah! Father told me to give you this after showing you this.”

She should’ve given it to him earlier.

While Cho Ryu Hyang complained inside, Gongson Ahri took out a small scroll from her clothes.

Cho Ryu Hyang snatched it from her hands, and began reading.

[What do you think? Seeing those makes them go berserk, doesn’t it? Feels exciting, doesn’t it?]

Cho Ryu Hyang read the passage in Gongson Chun Gi’s playful voice, and smiled bitterly.

He could feel them going berserk inside him, like his teacher said.

It made his entire body tremble, in fact.

The power of the Shura Environment was going berserk inside him.

It hasn't even been that long since he learnt the technique, but the energy of the technique already grew from a size of a small grain of rice, to that of a big apple.

To think this power could affect the body controlled by the Moon Edge Blade Technique to this degree.

‘As expected of the Shura Environment.’

Indeed, this was an amazing amount of power.

He could understand why previous Popes of the church risked so much in trying to learn it.

But.....

‘I won't let you do what you want.’

Power was useless in the hands of someone who couldn't control

it.

That was what Cho Ryu Hyang believed.

And that made him want to control this power inside him.

Cho Ryu Hyang glared at the power of the Shura Environment struggling to get out of the sphere in his dantian.

He was looking inside his own body.

Then, the Moon Edge Blade Technique began to move.

Wuu—

The power of the Moon Edge Blade Technique came in contact with the power of the Shura Environment.

If the Shura Environment was akin to a sticky mess of bloody power, the Moon Edge Blood Technique was more clear, invisible, and clean energy.

When the two energies came in contact, the insides of Cho Ryu Hyang's body began to tremble violently.

The turbulence in his body immediately spread outside.

Tududuk–

Cho Ryu Hyang's arms suddenly bulged outwards, with the veins inside popping up, then contracted immediately.

His shoulders expanded massively as well, then returned to its original size. This effect was repeated on different parts of his body.

Crack–

With a sound of bones cracking, Cho Ryu Hyang's body constantly shook.

“Eh? Ehh?”

Gongson Ahri became confused when she saw this.

She didn't know what to do.

Just when she was about to ask for help outside,

A giant torrent of energy swept out from Cho Ryu Hyang's body.

“Kyaa!”

The force of this energy was enough to push Gongson Ahri to the

other side of the carriage.

At the same time, Cho Ryu Hyang opened his eyes.

He whispered softly to himself.

“.....Bastard.”

His whole body was covered in sweat, but he still made a satisfactory smile.

He managed to contain the power of the Shura Environment.

Then, his eyes met with Gongson Ahri's, who was quietly looking at him from the corner.

Cho Ryu Hyang scratched the back of his head, and spoke.

“I apologize. I didn't get a chance to help you. Are you hurt anywhere?”

“I, I'm fine.”

Cho Ryu Hyang smiled, and kept reading the letter Gongson Ahri gave him.

[It's a little early, but there is a need to put that thing back in its

place. Those guys will definitely go crazy, as they do not wish to be sealed, when they see the bracelets. Ignore them, and wear the bracelet.]

Cho Ryu Hyang nodded.

He finally understood why the energy inside him was berserking like so.

The pair of bracelets in front of him seemed to be made to suppress the power of the Shura Environment.

[Since this is something I created myself recently, you don't have to do anything complicated. Just wear it to suppress that thing before it restores its power. You'll be more comfortable that way. Well, at any case, this is just a temporary solution to your problems, but you should be safe for now.]

Cho Ryu Hyang faintly smiled.

He realized why his teacher gave this to him.

But he did not need them.

‘At least, for now.....’

Cho Ryu Hyang had used his own power to crush the power of the Shura Environment back into the sphere in his dantian.

He did not know how stronger he'd get in the future, but he shouldn't have many problems, for now.

Cho Ryu Hyang extended his hands to the bracelets in front of him.

When he touched them, he could feel a shock run down his spine, but he ignored it.

Clack-Clack-

Cho Ryu Hyang played around with the bracelets for a few seconds, then stuffed them into his pocket.

"I'll take care of these for now."

"Right....."

Gongson Ahri looked at Cho Ryu Hyang with a curious face.

According to her father, Cho Ryu Hyang should've put on the bracelet.

He should've then fainted inside the carriage.

Gongson Ahri quietly thought to herself while fondling the bottle

of medicine in her clothes.

‘It’s the first time.’

There has never been a case where her father’s words were incorrect.

Even the tiniest details matched what Gongson chun Gi had said.

Even the tiniest details.

But now, for the first time, Gongson Chun Gi’s words did not come to life.

For the entire day, Gongson Ahri watched Cho Ryu Hyang as if she was observing a peculiar animal, with the bottle of medicine in her hand.

Chapter 82. No Jin Nyung's Role

The harmonious expert that the Shaolin Temple proudly displayed to the world.

The Buddhist king, Godly Monk Kongye.

He, who was temporarily acting as the leader of the Alliance, was currently sitting with Gu Hui, the next heir of the Nanman Beast Gate.

“Amitabha.....”

Godly Monk Kongye put the steaming teacup to his mouth as he chanted buddhist prayers to himself.

Then, Gu Hui, who was seated on the other side, opened his mouth coldly.

“I gave you one month. Then waited for ten more days. Do we still need to wait more?”

Godly Monk Kongye shook his head.

“We have made our decision. This is why I am here with you today.”

Gu Hui's sharp, annoyed face disappeared when these words

were spoken.

This face was soon replaced by one that was filled with anticipation.

“That’s good. So you have made your decision?”

“Amitabha.....”

Godly Monk Kongye was hesitant on saying the answer.

Honestly speaking, he was against the decision that the Alliance made.

Right then, Gu Hui spoke.

“As you know, the Heavenly Demon Church is moving towards Sichuan. If we are slow to ally with each other, you would be the one to suffer.”

The Godly monk faintly smiled when he heard this.

“It is true that we must treat the church with care. But it is also true that the Nanman Beast Gate isn’t able to act freely due to the church, is it not?”

“.....What do you mean?”

“Did you not already have a talk of how you’ll take over the mainland with the North Sea Ice Palace?”

Gu Hui smiled.

But inside, he was extremely nervous.

Just how? How did they know of this?

The Godly Monk had somehow gotten hold of the information that the Nanman Beast Gate was working with the North Sea Ice Palace.

Many thoughts crossed Gu Hui’s mind in a short span of time.

But soon, Gu Hui opened his eyes with a smirk.

“How laughable. Since when did the godly monk of the Shaolin temple turn into a snake like this?”

This time, the Godly Monk was the one to smile awkwardly.

The young one in front of him wasn’t an easy opponent, as he thought.

This child wasn’t just good at fighting.

The child was also frighteningly strong.

He had realized that the Godly Monk tried to provoke him in an instant.

‘He’s not easy…….’

The fact that the North Sea Ice Palace, and the Nanman Beast Gate were working together to form an alliance with the Black Moon Guild and the Alliance was not a secret.

If one were to think about the Alliance’s current situation, allying with them was the most sound decision they could make.

The Heavenly Demon church was that powerful.

The higher-ups in the Alliance naturally talked about allying with them, but then Sanguan Zhongda, the strategist, stopped them.

He gave everyone a single question.

—Why did they ask for an alliance?

Why would they, who was not involved in all this in any way, try to fight the Heavenly Demon Church?

Even by suffering from immense losses?

Everyone in the Alliance became speechless when they heard this.

Nanman Beast Gate, and the North Sea Ice Palace.

They were not idiots.

There was no way they would step out to help the Alliance for nothing.

Then why?

Why would they fight the church?

Sanguan Zhongda answered this for them.

He took out a map of the mainland, and explained everything for them.

—They're probably trying to take this area for themselves. After all, they need this piece of land to expand into the mainland.

Only then did everyone nod their heads.

Both the Nanman Beast Gate, and the North Sea Ice Palace were trying to expand into the mainland.

Their interests aligned, and they decided to work together.

‘It would not be wise to bring in a bloodthirsty fox and a bloodthirsty wolf to chase out a tiger.....’

The Godly Monk came here in order to find out just what the Nanman Beast Gate was trying to do.

After all, the Alliance would only be able to prepare if they knew what was going on.

But their opponent was not easy to take on.

He had seen through all of the Godly Monk’s plans, and responded properly.

“Does it even matter, if you think about it?”

“What do you mean?”

Gu Hui looked straight at the Godly Monk, and opened his mouth slowly.

“It is not possible to block the Heavenly Demon Church without

working with us. It is hard to admit, but the church is the strongest force in the world, after all.”

The Godly Monk nodded.

The strongest expert, Gongson Chun Gi, combined with the strongest power that currently existed in the world.

It was not possible to take it on.

Right then, Gu Hui continued talking.

“But if we work together, the whole story changes. What we plan to do in the future does not matter for now. What matters is the fact that the Heavenly Demon Church is trying to expand. I’m sure even your strategist reached the same conclusion as I.”

“Amitabha.....”

Right.

No matter how fierce and bloodthirsty a wolf and a fox was, they could never measure up to a tiger.

It would be better to get rid of the tiger first, then think about getting rid of the fox and the wolf.

That was the conclusion Sanguan Zhongda had reached, and surprisingly enough, Gu Hui saw through it.

The Godly Monk took on a serious face.

The one in front of him was even smarter than he thought.

He was young, as well.

That made the Godly Monk afraid.

Just how much would this person grow?

It was not a stretch to think that this person might grow to be the second Gongson Chun Gi.

‘Perhaps we are bringing in a tiger cub into our midst, and not a wolf.....’

But there was nothing he could do about this.

The tiger stretched out its claws into Sichuan, threatening the Alliance.

“We will work with you.”

It was dangerous, but there was no choice.

When the Godly Monk said this with a grim face, Gu Hui nodded.

“Good choice.”

Only then could Gu Hui smile.

‘So the tasks that the North Sea Ice Palace was given is now complete.’

Allying with the Alliance was originally something the North Sea Ice Palace was supposed to do.

But then Juk Hyul Myung, the heir of the North Sea Ice Palace, foolishly injured himself in a fight. Due to this, the Nanman Beast Gate was forced to take on this task by themselves.

Gu Hui was not annoyed by this, however.

He merely became curious.

‘The one who fought with Juk Hyul Myung..... Shi Yup, was it?’

The heir of the North Sea Ice Palace was definitely not weak.

Gu Hui knew this as soon as they met.

‘Just as strong as me.....’

He didn’t want to admit it, but Juk Hyul Myung was as strong as him.

His pride seemed to be big enough to match his martial power as well. The fact that this prideful guy actually asked him for help meant that he had suffered greatly.

Of course, this made Gu Hui very curious.

‘Just who?’

He was unable to believe that someone other than Neng Mu Gi of the Black Moon Guild would be able to put Juk Hyul Myung in such a predicament.

‘Interesting.’

In any case, things were getting interesting now.

It seemed that even the Black Moon Guild had a useful expert.

To Gu Hui, who was trying to become the master of the next generation, the current state of the world was very satisfactory to him.

Cho Ryu Hyang took a hot bath from a decent house, which was something he had not done for a long time.

He smiled as dressed himself with a red face.

Un Hui's stealth technique was good enough to prevent Cho Ryu Hyang from noticing him without using Godly Vision.

But that was not the case for No Jin Nyung.

No Jin Nyung was quite easy to discover, even without Godly Vision.

It was almost as if he was shouting 'I'm here!'. It was even possible to hear his breathing.

'Well, there's nothing we can do about that for now.'

As stealth techniques were something that took practice to master, it took a lot of time for one to actually get good.

Normally, experts find a way to deal with such things easier, in order to master techniques faster, but No Jin Nyung couldn't do that.

After all, No Jin Nyung only valued simple, straightforward things.

This caused him to have trouble at hiding himself, even with much power.

His personality as a hotheaded person got in his way as well.

“Please come out for a bit.”

No Jin Nyung made a half-surprised, half-guilty face when he heard Cho Ryu Hyang call him out.

He pretended to not have heard any of it, but Cho Ryu Hyang kept looking at him.

“I’m not trying to punish you or anything. Come out.”

No Jin Nyung finally stepped out from behind the wall with a sad face.

Even to him, his skill at stealth techniques was just horrid.

After all, even normal people who didn’t practice martial arts were able to notice him.

He could remember the words Un Hui said to him multiple times

when learning stealth techniques.

–You are not using your strength efficiently.

But no matter how many times Un Hui explained this to No Jin Nyung, No Jin Nyung did not understand.

It was too hard.

No Jin Nyung walked to Cho Ryu Hyang. In the process of doing this, he kept looking around.

‘Just where is he?’

Although hiding in itself was not related to martial arts, detecting hidden people was.

The fact that even he, an expert on the same level as Un Hui, showed that Un Hui was that good at hiding himself.

While No Jin Nyung didn’t acknowledge Un Hui, he had to acknowledge Un Hui’s stealth skills.

The thing he really couldn’t understand was Cho Ryu Hyang.

‘He can sense Un Hui? How?’

It was unbelievable, but it came from the mouth of Un Hui himself.

It had to be true in that case.

Cho Ryu Hyang, without realizing what No Jin Nyung was thinking, looked over to where Un Hui was for a second, and opened his mouth.

“Isn’t it hard to try and hide yourself?”

“It is, but it’s fine, hehe. I can hide my shadow now.”

When No Jin Nyung said this with an awkward smile, Cho Ryu Hyang smiled back.

“So you’re getting better.”

“Yes. Ehehe.”

No Jin Nyung smiled like an idiot when he got praised. Cho Ryu Hyang smiled as he looked at No Jin Nyung.

Strangely enough, it was hard to hate this person.

No, he was a person you just naturally liked.

Almost too much.

Was it because all of No Jin Nyung's emotions could be seen on his face?

After thinking for a bit, Cho Ryu Hyang spoke again with a smile.

“You can guard me in public now.”

“Haah? Is that fine?”

“Yes. I do need someone to help me out and guard me at the same time in public.”

“Right.”

No Jin Nyung nodded with a delighted grin.

He was being shouted at by Un Hui constantly because he had to learn stealth techniques, but now, there was no need to be shouted at anymore.

Even that made him happy, but Cho Ryu Hyang decided to go one step further.

“And now, you two may sleep in a room other than me. You can guard me at night by taking turns.”

[Impossible!]

Somebody dropped from a ceiling, like a drop of water.

It was Un Hui.



As soon as he appeared, he looked at Cho Ryu Hyang with a stiff face.

“Please take back the order you just gave us.”

“Isn’t it hard for you?”

Un Hui glared at No Jin Nyung viciously for a second, then bowed down.

“That idiot might not know, but I’m fine. I was trained like this, and was taught like this.”

He was trained to be an assassin in the first place.

Being in the darkness made him comfortable.

But Cho Ryu Hyang shook his head.

“It makes me uncomfortable.”

“.....”

Un Hui became speechless.

While he put on a dumb face, Cho Ryu Hyang sat comfortably on his seat, and spoke.

“I’m really thankful for how much you have protected me during this time. But such intense protection isn’t really needed anymore.”

“But.....”

“We have to be ready for anything.”

Un Hui turned serious when he heard Cho Ryu Hyang's tone. He decided to hear Cho Ryu Hyang out completely.

“Even if you are a harmonious expert, you wouldn't be able to make use of all your power without sleep. The place where we are going now won't allow you to survive in such a condition.”

“.....”

“Even if this reason might seem a little hard to accept, you must follow my orders this time. Also, it would be hard for me to have a good rest while knowing that the two of you aren't even sleeping.”

Un Hui became thoughtful.

It was true that Cho Ryu Hyang was discomforted by Un Hui guarding him 24/7.

But that wasn't a proper reason for him to guard Cho Ryu Hyang less.

After all, Cho Ryu Hyang's safety outweighed his discomfort.

‘But.....’

It wasn't easy to refuse Cho Ryu Hyang's order.

After all, Cho Ryu Hyang was a master he decided to serve for the rest of his life.

After some thought, Un Hui bowed.

"I will follow your orders, until you become used to us guarding you 24/7."

"Thank you for being so understanding."

Cho Ryu Hyang smiled brightly.

He expected No Jin Nyung to agree to his request immediately.

But not Un Hui.

As Un Hui was quite intelligent, Cho Ryu Hyang expected Un Hui to disagree with him a bit. He was thankful that Un Hui was so understanding.

He could see that Un Hui truly cared about him from this. That made Cho Ryu Hyang happy.

"I want to go on a walk for a bit."

When Cho Ryu Hyang shook off the excess water from his head and stood up, No Jin Nyung quickly prepared to go out.

Un Hui also prepared himself by hiding his body. Cho Ryu Hyang nodded when he saw this, and spoke quietly.

“Good.”

What should he say about this.

It felt like everything was in its right place.

He felt such a thing at that moment.

‘What is this?’

It felt like he would see this scene many times in the future.

Cho Ryu Hyang smiled faintly, and walked out to the garden.

He stood at its centre, and breathed in.

He could see.

He could see the Emei Mountain, which was standing quietly

below the moonlight.

‘We’ll be arriving soon.’

The expeditionary force of the Heavenly Demon Church.

Their destination was a region known as Jiulong (九龍) of Sichuan.

This was an area that belonged to the Emei Sect, but was also close to the Qingcheng Sect, as well as the Sichuan Tang Clan.

There was no choice but to fight those of the Alliance in order to settle in to Sichuan.

‘I’m different from before.’

Cho Ryu Hyang quietly looked down at his hands.

In the past, these hands were unable to hold anything other than a brush.

Not anymore.

He learned martial arts, and created his own formation.

He was much stronger than him of the past.

Cho Ryu Hyang licked his lips as he thought this.

When the fighting begins, there may come a moment where he would have to hurt someone.

No, it will definitely happen.

‘I won’t try to run away from it.’

If he tried to run here, he wouldn’t be able to meet ‘him’.

The one who killed his teacher, Jo Gi Chun.

Krrrr—

‘The Wudang Sect..... and Yu Sul Bin.’

Cho Ryu Hyang ground his teeth.

He would make them definitely pay.

At that moment, while CHO Ryu Hyang was thinking such things, something strange came into his eyes.

“Nn?”

Cho Ryu Hyang touched his glasses, and tilted his head in confusion.

He blinked several times, to confirm if he wasn't imagining things.

Cho Ryu Hyang made a strange face as he looked at the Emei Mountain.

‘What is this?’

He saw something strange.

Something he shouldn't have seen.

Was he imagining things?

After thinking a bit, Cho Ryu Hyang opened his mouth.

“How long do we have to travel until we arrive?”

“We'll arrive tomorrow.”

Cho Ryu Hyang opened his mouth after pondering on Un Hui's response for a bit.

“So I’ll have to confirm tomorrow, in that case.....”

When Cho Ryu Hyang said this,

[So you can already see such a thing..... what a monster.]

Cho Ryu Hyang widened his eyes when he heard something in his head.

He could hear Zhuge Liang, who had been staying quiet for a long time.

Chapter 83. Nine Lands Medicinal Flower

At Jiulong, Sichuan, the area under the control of the Emei Sect, and the area that could be said to be the heart of the Alliance, the Heavenly Demon Church established its Sichuan branch.

This was an extremely shocking event.

The church had extended itself into Sichuan without shedding even a drop of blood.

Wasn't this truly a perfect example of taking over a castle without shedding blood (無血入城)?

Many storytellers used this event to make fun of the Alliance, but even then, the Alliance didn't do a single thing about any of this.

'This was expected.'

Cho Ryu Hyang looked down at a document in his hand at the centre of the Sichuan branch of the church, then closed his eyes.

The church had already expected that getting into Sichuan itself wouldn't be that difficult.

'The problems begin now.'

Cho Ryu Hyang adjusted his glasses.

Although the Alliance didn't do much when the church provoked them, it didn't mean that they gave up.

Why would they stay quiet when the enemy was right in front of them?

They were just waiting quietly, since they didn't have power.

The moment they are given a chance, the Alliance would take up their sword and attack.

The first day the church came into Sichuan.

Everyone was very alert and nervous, but nothing happened all the way till night.

Cho Ryu Hyang, who was sitting with his eyes closed for a bit, opened his eyes. He lifted his head, and looked in front.

“Did you find out?”

“Yes, lord heir.”

The Leader of the Mara's Heavenly Wind Division.

Lim Hak Gyum faintly smiled towards Cho Ryu Hyang, who

found him while he was hidden with ease, and read his report.

[There are no forces from the Alliance within the radius of about half a day's worth of land.]

“Understood.”

It was as he expected.

The experts of the Alliance weren't fools.

If they fought now, it was obvious who was going to lose.

There was no way they'd try to fight head-on.

“That's good. It looks like we can work tomorrow according to the plan. Please tell this to the master of the Ruling Fire House as well.”

[Yes sir.]

With this, all the urgent matters at hand was over.

Cho Ryu Hyang smiled, and stood up.

Then, Lim Hak Gyum, who was prostrating before him, stood up with a confused face.

[Is there somewhere you need to go so late at night?]

Cho Ryu Hyang nodded, then looked out the window.

‘A full moon.’

A full moon was staring down at earth quietly.

What Cho Ryu Hyang was trying to confirm was easier to do at night than day.

“There’s no need to wait. This is a simple task that’ll probably take moments.”

Lim Hak Gyum thought for a bit.

Since the church came into Sichuan today, the area wasn’t very secure yet.

There could be danger lurking anywhere.

‘But.....’

Liim Hak Gyum, who had scouted out the entire area already, thought to himself with a serious face.

‘Since he has two harmonious experts with him, nothing critical should occur.’

Harmonious experts were actually very rare.

Right now, in the church, there were four harmonious experts, if you were to omit Gongson Chun Gi.

Ju Sang San, and Wu Gyuho.

The two guardians had already taken up a spot in the list of the 3 Sovereigns, 5 Emperors, and the 7 Kings.

And the two that were still unknown to the world were Un Hui, and No Jin Nyung.

The ones who would lead the next generation of the church.

‘This truly is the strongest military force the church ever had in history.’

Lim Hak Gyum’s blood boiled in excitement when he thought about the power the church currently had.

Just a single generation.

Was there ever a time the church had so much power in a single

generation?

No. This had never happened before till now.

A harmonious expert.

Each of them had power enough to take over a single sect easily on their own.

Two of these experts were with Cho Ryu Hyang as a bodyguard.

Cho Ryu Hyang truly was guarded very well.

‘As expected, the Pope indeed is amazing.’

Lim Hak Gyum was assuming that Gongson Chun Gi was the one who put Un Hui and No Jin Nyung as Cho Ryu Hyang’s bodyguard.

“Then, I’ll be going out for a bit.”

Lim Hak Gyum came back to his senses.

The heir had already prepared, and was ready to go out.

[Please come back before morning.]

Cho Ryu Hyang nodded, and turned away.

Like he said before, he just had to ‘confirm’.

It wasn’t something that would take up much time.

‘What was that?’

He had managed to notice it in a passing moment. Did he really see it correctly?

And Zhuge Liang’s words were weighing in his mind quite a bit as well.

The fact that the man stopped talking after trying to say something bothered Cho Ryu Hyang.

Shf–

While he was thinking about Zhuge Liang, Un Hui revealed himself.

“Is it fine to not take that idiot with us?”

“We need to be as secretive as possible.”

What Cho Ryu Hyang saw was located in the mountain of the

Emei Sect.

It was located within the area of the Emei Sect.

There was a need to move stealthily because of this.

‘Right. For now.....’

The situation would change sooner or later.

As the church set its foot in Sichuan, the matters in Sichuan would change in an instant.

Un Hui nodded.

“Understood. It would be better to not take that idiot, then.”

If they were to bring No Jin Nyung, they would become anything but stealthy.

“I’ll take you.”

Cho Ryu Hyang nodded.

Un Hui turned, and sat down with his back to Cho Ryu Hyang.

“Please, get on.”

Cho Ryu Hyang hesitated for a bit, then got on Un Hui’s back.

He knew he had too little power to even talk about humiliation that comes from doing this.

‘I should learn Qinggong in the future.’

When Cho Ryu Hyang was thinking this.

“Where would you like to go?”

Cho Ryu Hyang came back to his senses, and pointed at a single point located deep within the mountain of Emei.



Un Hui measured the distance for a second, and nodded.

“We’ll leave, then.”

Paan—!

With the sound of air rapidly moving back, Un Hui’s body turned into a single line.

Shuaa—!

Cho Ryu Hyang was extremely surprised at this immense speed.

The air was like a knife moving against his skin.

It was even faster than the carriage he was on.

It was hard to even breath.

‘As expected of a harmonious expert.....’

He really was amazed.

This truly was an amazing speed.

To think it was possible to move at such speeds.

Un Hui jumped, using a rock beneath him as support, and leapt even higher by jumping once more on a tree branch.

After that, he used the tree branches at the top to move even faster.

Sss–

The speed of a harmonious expert was even greater than Cho Ryu Hyang could imagine.

And seeing that Un Hui wasn't breathing that hard either, it seemed that he wasn't even that tired.

Cho Ryu Hyang bit his lips as he thought of something.

He had this kind of an expert as his enemy.

‘Yu Sul Bin.....’

The man was probably as strong as Un Hui.

‘Eighty.....’

The talent the man possessed was quite amazing.

After all, it was equivalent to Un Hui’s.

‘But that’s in.’

It didn’t matter how talented Yu Sul Bin was, or how strong he was.

Cho Ryu Hyang would have his revenge.

While Cho Ryu Hyang was thinking such things, Un Hui stopped on top of a single branch.

Shwaa–

The wind that followed them during the trip shook the surroundings violently.

In the distance, Cho Ryu Hyang was able to spot 'that' from before.

‘What is that?’

The number that could be seen in his eye was immense.

Its color was red, as well.

Cho Ryu Hyang became hesitant when he felt a feeling of danger creep up on him.

‘Should I go near it.....?’

So far, there were many cases where a number's numerical value was large, but there was never a case where the number itself was large.

And the value of that number was changing as well.

It really was a strange phenomenon.

“Is it here?”

Cho Ryu Hyang was unable to make a decision, even after hearing Un Hui's voice.

Un Hui probably couldn't see this phenomenon.

‘Should I go?’

Zhuge Liang's words held him back quite a bit for some reason.

After thinking for quite a while, Cho Ryu Hyang spoke as he fixed his glasses.

“It's over there.”

“Understood.”

Un Hui looked at the direction Cho Ryu Hyang was pointing at, then exerted pressure on the top of the tree he was on with his foot.

The tree bent backwards like a giant bow.

When Cho Ryu Hyang began to feel his body tilt backwards,

Paan—!

Un Hui moved rapidly through the air, using the tree.

Shwiii–!

The distance between Cho Ryu Hyang and that ‘thing’ rapidly closed as Un Hui moved.

Cho Ryu Hyang widened his eyes as they moved through the air.

“Ah.....”

A sigh came out of Cho Ryu Hyang.

Tuk–

The moment Un Hui set his foot on the ground, Cho Ryu Hyang gripped Un Hui’s shoulders strongly.

“My lord?”

When Un Hui made a confused face, Cho Ryu Hyang bit his teeth.

“.....Be careful.”

Un Hui looked around at Cho Ryu Hyang’s words.

But he couldn't really see anything.

After this, he opened up his senses.

As he was a harmonious expert, his senses were much better than those of a normal man's.

But he still couldn't find anything.

While Un Hui was looking around confusedly,

Cho Ryu Hyang was also getting confused.

'I can't see it?'

The moment he got closer, the giant number disappeared.

Just what was going on?

Then, something caught Cho Ryu Hyang's eye.

"Let me down for a second."

Un Hui kneeled, and carefully put Cho Ryu Hyang down.

Then, Cho Ryu Hyang marched forward, then touched the

ground, the stone, and the trees.

His eyes twitched.

‘This is.....’

It was a formation.

If this really was just a normal formation, Cho Ryu Hyang wouldn’t have been surprised at all.

What surprised him was the fact that the formation wasn’t ‘artificial’.

He confirmed multiple times, but found that the formation wasn’t created by a human.

It was created by nature, thanks to having several conditions for a formation being met in the area.

‘So these really did exist.’

He had heard of these in the past from his teacher.

A formation of nature.

It was a formation created after a long period of time, due to the

harmony between the trees, the grass, and the rocks.

These formations didn't really do much harm.

It just warded off intruders, or made people confused.

A normal formation expert wouldn't have even been able to notice such a formation.

Cho Ryu Hyang was only able to realize this fact due to his sight.

According to his memory, even his teacher, Jo Gi Chun, never managed to see such a formation.

Cho Ryu Hyang began to think again.

Inside the formation, there should be that 'thing' he saw earlier.

That was certain.

'This might really be dangerous.'

Cho Ryu Hyang touched his glasses.

He could feel his heart tighten all of the sudden.

His senses were warning him of danger.

Cho Ryu Hyang couldn't ignore his own senses.

Zhuge Liang clearly told him before that anything that could harm him was displayed with red numbers.

What was in the formation was bright red, and it was giant as well.

‘But.....’

He was curious.

Curiosity had taken the better of him.

After thinking for a long time, Cho Ryu Hyang took a look at Un Hui.

Un Hui was silently watching Cho Ryu Hyang from a distance.

“.....I’m thinking of doing something now. Can you stay quiet while I do this?”

“As you command.”

“Don’t shout or move too much.”

“Understood.”

Cho Ryu Hyang rolled up his sleeves, and licked his lips.

He decided to look at what was inside.

‘I can’t go back with empty hands, after all.....’

It would be disappointing if he went back with empty hands.

That feeling excited Cho Ryu Hyang’s heart.

And that was why Cho Ryu Hyang decided to be adventurous.

‘Let’s do this.’

It was easy to destroy a formation.

There were formations that required someone to go in first, but that was usually for an extremely complicated formation. A formation like this could be easily destroyed from the outside.

Well, easy for Cho Ryu Hyang, that is.

Paa–!

Once Cho Ryu Hyang touched something on the ground, and broke a tree branch next to him, the world opened up to him.

It was same for Un Hui as well.

It was almost as if the trees in front of him suddenly lost its vibrancy?

‘Amazing.’

He had already known that the heir was a master of formations.

But this still amazed him.

While Un Hui was looking at everything with amazement, Cho Ryu Hyang stepped forward.

There was something in front of him.

And it was dragging him in.

Un Hui slowly followed Cho Ryu Hyang.

How far had they walked?

After a moment, Cho Ryu Hyang stopped moving.

Un Hui stopped as well.

‘What is it?’

There was barely anything in front of him at all.

There was just an empty field.

The fact that there was such a field in the middle of a forest was surprising, but there was a strange flower in the middle that drew even more attention.

Un Hui’s eyes widened as he carefully observed the flower.

‘Nine Lands Medicinal Flower (九地蘭藥花)?’

Was that not the medicinal herb of legends?

When his mouth was about to widen in surprise.

A small, white bunny leapt from the back of the flower.

The moment Cho Ryu Hyang saw this, he began to tremble.

Cho Ryu Hyang spoke with fear, towards the confused Un Hui.

“.....Run.”

“What?”

It was a small whisper.

When Un Hui said this, Cho Ryu Hyang began to move backwards while trembling violently.

“Run, damn it!”

Un Hui’s face immediately changed.

The heir was a master of formations.

There must be a reason why the heir was being like this.

Un Hui quickly grabbed Cho Ryu Hyang, and ran.

But it was already too late.

Chapter 84. Little Monster

“What, did you dream or something?”

Cho Ryu Hyang, who had been struggling quite a bit in his sleep, found his teacher, and made a surprised face.

He quickly stood up.

Gongson Chun Gi pushed the boy back to bed, then spoke.

“It’s fine, it’s fine. You should lay down a bit more. We still have time before we leave.”

A day before the trip, Gongson Chun Gi came into Cho Ryu Hyang’s room, and watched the boy all night.

He had been thinking all this time.

Cho Ryu Hyang looked at his teacher with a tired face.

He could see that his teacher’s eyes held feelings of trust and worry at the same time.

When he saw such humane feelings emanate from his teacher, he was a bit relieved, and surprised at the same time.

Cho Ryu Hyang smiled, and spoke with a slightly tired voice.

“.....I feel like I had a really long dream.”

He was still very confused.

He felt like he went on a really long trip in his dream.

He didn't know if this was reality, or if the world in his dream was reality.

But he soon began to be able to distinguish which was which.

His senses were coming back.

“Hoh? A dream at a time like this..... Did it have any pretty girls in it?”

Cho Ryu Hyang smiled at his teacher's playful tone.

“There were no pretty girls. It's just.....”

“Just?”

Cho Ryu Hyang didn't say anything for a second.

He spread out his hands with a thoughtful face, and muttered quietly.

“My body became exceedingly light..... and I traveled to places. And I think I touched something with these hands.”

Cho Ryu Hyang was already beginning to forget the contents of the dream.

Cho Ryu Hyang blinked a few times with a dumb face, then looked at his teacher.

Gongson Chun Gi looked at his disciple with a little confusion, and asked a question.

“Where did you go?”

Cho Ryu Hyang desperately grasped at his fading dreams, and opened his mouth.

“I looked around everywhere in the world. But even that wasn’t enough, so I went down the sea, and even flew up into space.”

He then grabbed something with his hands at the end, but he wasn’t able to remember just what he had grabbed.

‘What was that?’

It seemed really important.

But he just couldn't remember it.

Gongson Chun Gi spoke, as Cho Ryu Hyang scrunched up his face trying to remember what he had dreamed.

“You dreamt a really adventurous dream, huh. That's unlike you.”

Adventurous?

Cho Ryu Hyang smiled, and nodded.

“Yes, I think so. I think I might have wanted to explore the world a bit.”

Gongson Chun Gi quietly stared at his disciple, then opened his mouth.

“Weaklings believe that dreams are signs of the future, and fear it. But strong ones believe that dreams are a manifestation of their desires.”

“.....”

“It seems that you have quite a big desire.”

Cho Ryu Hyang made an awkward face.

He felt that his teacher was right.

Gongson Chun Gi lightly tapped on his disciple's shoulder, and spoke quietly.

“Be careful of that old man with the fan.”

“What?”

What old man?

When Cho Ryu Hyang made a confused face,

Gongson Chun Gi grinned, and opened his mouth.

“You see, I really, really don't like that guy. Even though he's just watching for now.”

What was he talking about?

While Cho Ryu Hyang was thinking about his teacher's words confusedly, his teacher smirked, and changed the topic.

“How much of the Moon Edge Blade Technique did you learn?”

“I passed Ryun.”

“You still have a lot to do, huh.”

When Cho Ryu Hyang nodded with a bitter face, Gongson Chun Gi spoke.

“Try not to use the Shura Environment as much when you go out. That thing likes to go berserk the more you use it. I just came to tell you that.”

“Understood.”

“I’ll be there with you at Sichuan later on. Go buy some good drinks for me meanwhile.”

“I’ll do that.”

Gongson Chun Gi said this, and exited the room with a playful smile.

“Ouch, my back.”

Gongson Chun Gi exited Cho Ryu Hyang's room, and sat down on a random rock in the back yard while massaging his waist.

After inheriting the Shura Environment to Cho Ryu Hyang, Gongson Chun Gi had gotten a lot weaker.

“No, it's not that I actually got weaker.”

Gongson Chun Gi had been strong from the moment he had been born.

He wasn't talking about his body, or skills. The person of Gongson Chun Gi had been strong from the start.

A sense of perseverance that would not wilt under any circumstances, and the sense of leisure that allowed him to smile at any given situation.

This was a type of strength unrelated to martial arts.

Gongson Chun Gi looked up at the sky, and laughed a little.

Shura Environment.

The way this technique was transferred was to split off a part of it from his body, to implant it to the next heir.

This ‘inheritance’ ceremony was dangerous enough to take away the lives of many former heirs.

‘Well, at least it’s easy to pass on. If you don’t take into account the fact that you age instantly.’

It wasn’t very noticeable due to his youthful personality, but Gongson Chun Gi was able to feel that he had aged quite a bit.

He trembled more than usual when a cold wind passed nowadays.

He could even feel the wind pass through his bones.

But even at a time like this, Gongson Chun Gi smiled.

After all, he had earned as much as he had lost.

‘I might actually be able to get rid of this damn side effect.’

All this time, Gongson Chun Gi worked ceaselessly to get rid of the Shura Environment’s side effect.

Everyone thought that he had shortened the countless verses of the Shura Environment out of laziness, but that wasn’t the case at all.

He did all this with backbreaking work, in order to try and get rid of the side effect.

And when he let Cho Ryu Hyang inherit the Shura Environment, he was able to realize something.

‘I can get rid of the side effect.’

When he thought of this, he could only laugh.

The results of his life’s work was finally coming into his view.

He just needed time to confirm it now.

Gongson Chun Gi was planning on spending the rest of his time trying to get rid of the side effect.

Doing that would benefit both Cho Ryu Hyang and the church.

‘This isn’t.....good.’

Cho Ryu Hyang bit his teeth as he ran.

He made a wrong decision.

He was too greedy.

He had been ensnared by the beast called curiosity.

And the price for being caught by the beast was truly horrifying.

‘It’, who had been quietly watching Cho Ryu Hyang and Un Hui run, began to move slowly.

Cho Ryu Hyang grit his teeth when he saw this.

‘Would it work?’

He couldn’t get Un Hui dragged into this.

Cho Ryu Hyang made a concerned face as he fondled the gems in his pocket.

At that moment, ‘it’ thought.

‘What an interesting child.’

‘It’ was exceedingly happy after his thousand-year old seal got broken.

‘It’ was happy enough to disregard ‘its’ status, and dance around.

What surprised 'it' was that a mere human managed to break the seal created by the heavens itself.

But that didn't really matter to 'it'.

'It' was just thinking of gifting the Nine Lands Medicinal Flower to the boy.

'Well, I was only going to do that as long as the boy didn't recognize me, though.'

'It' wasn't going to give the flower away anymore.

'It' became interested in the boy.

'It' revealed its sharp teeth, and grinned.

That child.

That child was able to see 'it' even when 'it' hid 'itself'.

It was kind of confusing at first, but the boy was clearly looking at 'it'.

The child must've had a lot of fortuitous encounters to see 'it'.

‘It’ tried to just leave everything at that at first.

‘But.....’

Something was strange.

‘It’ could smell something that wasn’t of human origin from that child.

It was strange.

‘He has something in his body? What?’

There was something that even ‘it’ couldn’t recognize, even with its eyes and nose?

And that something was in a human of all things?

‘It’ began to focus.

‘Child, just what are you hiding?’

‘It’ stretched out ‘its’ senses like a spiderweb, and surveyed the child’s body.

When that spiderweb touched the boy, the boy began to twitch.

Sensitive, wasn't he?

'It' just ignored the boy's reactions, and focused more.

Only then could 'it' see.

[Hoh?]

'It' widened 'its' eyes, and lifted 'its' body.

'It' then licked its lips greedily.

[A mere human managed to attain a dragon's pearl?]

Even though the pearl was damaged, it still wasn't something a human could take.

'I should take it back.'

When 'it' thought this, the boy stepped back like a surprised deer.

[Foolish child.]

The rabbit, who possessed snow-white fur, stood up on its two

legs, and began stretching.

It then got into position, and grinned.

[Hehe, this'll be fun.]

This would be the first fun it had in a thousand years.

It would definitely be fun.

The child kept staring back at it with a fearful gaze as he was carried away by the person who was behind him.

[Running away? That'd be no good. There's a lot of things I'd like to ask you, boy.]

The rabbit said this as it took a single step. It then disappeared at that spot, then reappeared like a ghost in front of Cho Ryu Hyang.

Pyong~!

Cho Ryu Hyang's face paled as he saw the rabbit who appeared in front of him with a strange sound.

He couldn't even see it move.

Cho Ryu Hyang threw out six gems without even thinking.

Clack–

He seemed to have thrown it without thinking, but this was actually a formation.

Conditional Formation.

That had been activated.

[Eh?]

The rabbit disappeared in mid-air.

“R, run faster!”

When Cho Ryu Hyang shouted this, Un Hui put Cho Ryu Hyang at his back, and began to move faster.

Paa–!

With a sound of the air ripping apart, Un Hui traversed several tens of meters in an instant. Only then did Cho Ryu Hyang get relaxed.

He seemed to have escaped immediate danger.

But right at that moment.

Crack—!

Cho Ryu Hyang could see the formation far away get broken to pieces.

His eyes widened.

The formation that was created earlier was made in a hurry, but was still a formidable formation.

It was much, much stronger than the one used against No Jin Nyung.....

‘It destroyed the formation in an instant?’

As expected, the being in front of him truly was a monster he couldn’t handle.



Cho Ryu Hyang's eyes started to show a light of despair.

[What the? So you can even use fields? You really have a talent for surprising your elders.]

The rabbit made an excited face after destroying Cho Ryu Hyang's formation.

Even when the boy was getting farther away from it, the rabbit seemed very laid back.

Cho Ryu Hyang looked back, and bit his lips.

‘It’s coming.’

He didn’t know what the rabbit was going to do, but he couldn’t even see the rabbit’s movements.

It was the same for this case as well.

Pyong~!

Again, the rabbit appeared with a strange, playful sound. Cho Ryu Hyang grit his teeth.

Right then.

Shuaa–! Kuang–!

Cho Ryu Hyang was able to see a lump of Gang Qi fly by.

Un Hui had begun to slash at the rabbit with his short sword.

His attacks were very sudden, and that much effective.

The monstrous rabbit had been stalled by the sword for a bit.

Cho Ryu Hyang looked at Un Hui with eyes filled with admiration.

The rabbit hit the floor, spat out blood, and began to complain.

[Hn, so we even have a harmonious person here? What the hell's been happening for the last thousand years I wasn't here?]

Un Hui looked down at the rabbit with a curious gaze.

A rabbit who was looking up at him with a human-like posture.

It was speaking in human tongue, as well.

This was already surprising enough, but what surprised him more was the fact that the rabbit managed to block his ambush.

It managed to block his attacks perfectly.

The rabbit began to stroke its chin with a delighted face.

[It wouldn't do to fight a harmonious person with bare hands now, would it? I suppose I'll have to take 'him' out]

'Him'?

Who was 'him'?

When Cho Ryu Hyang made an anxious face, the rabbit grinned playfully.

[I haven't taken 'him' out since [the battle with Sun Wukong](#), now have I?]

Vun vun vun–

The rabbit's body suddenly began to resonate with its surroundings.

Cho Ryu Hyang's eyes widened when he saw this.

“Right, this was it.”

The giant red number he could see from the distance.

He was wondering why the number had disappeared. But in reality, the number was too big for him to see up close.

[You should be honored, human.]

Tudududu–!

Un Hui felt an immense amount of energy in the area, and gripped tightly onto his sword.

“So it’s a monster.”

Un Hui silently muttered this to himself.

The rabbit heard this, and shook its head.

[Tch, don’t put this elder down in the same place as those bastards, dumb human.]

Un Hui ignored the rabbit’s words, then made a regretful face.

‘I should’ve finished it off when it was unguarded.’

He was regretful of letting go of such a good chance to finish off the monster.

And now, the monster was beginning to grow in strength.

Just watching the thing get stronger made him feel nervous.

‘I can’t just let it keep getting stronger.’

Un Hui quickly made his move towards the rabbit.

He didn’t know what the rabbit was trying to do, but there was no doubt that it would be dangerous.

There was no need to wait for a dangerous thing to appear.

Un Hui supported Cho Ryu Hyang at his back with one hand, and swung his sword with the other.

[Too late.]

Bang–!

The rabbit blocked Un Hui’s sword with something.

It was a small iron hammer that it was holding with two hands.

Un Hui moved back, and looked at it with squinted eyes.

“.....Mochi Pestle?”

Bam, bam–!

The rabbit struck the ground a few times with the pestle, and smiled.

Cho Ryu Hyang whispered to himself when he saw this.

“Could it be, the moon rabbit?”

The rabbit blinked a few times when it heard Cho Ryu Hyang's words.

It then grinned delightedly.

[Ehehe, what a perceptive child.]

Cho Ryu Hyang frowned as he looked at the rabbit.

Things weren't really going too well, he thought.

Right then, the rabbit moved.

Chapter 85. Seal

“Do you recognize your sins?”

The bloody white-haired man.

That man smiled as he supported his broken body with his pestle.

“.....How entertaining. To think I'd hear something like this from an idiot like you.. Ptui! The future really isn't something you can predict.”

In front of the white-haired man was a black-haired man.



The black-haired man stared at the white haired man for a bit, then smiled.

“You’re actually pretty lucky to have met me, Pian Mu (便木).”

The black-haired man took out a small talisman as he walked towards the white-haired man.

The white-haired man’s eyes narrowed.

“.....Sun Wukong, what the hell are you trying to do?”

Sun Wukong.

He, who was the current lord of monsters, the one called the Monkey King, smirked, and spoke in a friendly tone.

“I can relate with you right now the most. You see, I was a bit of a troublemaker in the past.”

“.....Bullshit.”

“Well, that’s not all, really..... To be honest, I just can’t bear to see the next king of monsters die here.”

Paa-!

A bright light came out of the talisman, and the white-haired man was replaced by a small, cute rabbit.

[T, this is.....]

“Kuku, as expected, the talismans made by Daode Tianzun really are effective. If only that old man would stop complaining for once.”

As Sun Wukong spoke to himself, the rabbit looked at its own two hands in confusion.

It observed its hands with a surprised expression.

Sun Wukong looked down at this rabbit as he stroked his beard, and spoke.

“You’re actually pretty cute, aren’t yah? Go live in the mortal world quietly for now. Since this uncle has bad memory, it would do well for you to stay quiet for just a thousand years.”

Crack-craack-!

The moment he said these words, the floor the rabbit was on began to crack.

White clouds could be seen below.

The rabbit began to fall.

Sun Wukong spoke as he watched the rabbit fall.

“Ah, yeah. If you get lucky and find a guy who renames you, you might get unsealed quicker. Have hope, cutie pie.”

The rabbit shouted in rage when it heard the word “cutie pie”.

[Sun Wukong! I will definitely kill you!]

“Puhehe, you’re 10,000 years too early for that. I’ll still wait, though.”

The rabbit.

He, who had been expelled out of heaven in the past, was having lots of fun at the moment.

[The mortal world is quite fun.]

Bang-! Baang-!

“Kuh!”

Un Hui trembled whenever the pestle was swung.

‘It’s this strong even when being parried.....’

He wasn’t even taking a direct hit.

He was parrying the hits, but his shoulder felt like it was about to break.

Contrary to Un Hui, the rabbit was being extremely lax as of now.

It didn’t even have a tenth of its former power, but this was more than enough to take care of the person here.

It could take on several Harmonious people at once with this power.

Even so.....

[Too weak.]

It was regretful.

The effect of having its power sealed for a long time affected its strength a lot.

It could feel that the Godly Power inside it was not moving properly.

But it was still satisfied with what it got.

Strength would recover all in due time, anyway.

Baaang-!

With a giant sound, the man with the mask flew back a great distance.

The rabbit became surprised.

‘He took a direct hit on purpose?’

What was the reason?

He had purposefully pretended to ignore the man trying to parry his moves, but now the man took a direct hit.

‘He’s trying to do something.’

What would that be?

It became excited.

The rabbit waited.

What was the man trying to do?

Strangely enough, the man did not do anything.

The kid at the man's back dropped down, and opened his mouth with a tired face.

“You can do whatever you want if you destroy this.”

The boy then took out a single gem, then stuck it in the ground.

The rabbit became alert.

Warning signs were ringing everywhere in its head.

‘That kid is dangerous.’

The kid was a rare sort that could use extremely powerful fields.

When it looked around, it could see that the surroundings were already filled with gems.

A chill ran down its back.

Vuun-!

An ominous feeling, and a strange vibration.

The rabbit quickly moved.

Pachichichi-!

[Kuh!]

With a loud sound, the rabbit struck the air and flew back.

It tried to leave before the field fully activated, but something powerful had blocked it.

[Damn it! Just when?]

Its area was extremely large.

A formation as large as this one could actually be dangerous.

When the rabbit began to condense energy once more, the kid adjusted the glass on his face and spoke coldly.

“Go back to your moon palace, crazy rabbit.”

[Shut up, kid.]

The rabbit gathered more energy.

‘I need to do this in one hit.’

It might work if it attacked now.

Vuun vuun vuun-!

The moment the rabbit focused enough energy into its pestle, the kid said something to the man with the mask.

Then, the masked man threw his dagger.

Pang-!

The red energy that was gathered at the tip of the dagger smashed into the rabbit’s face.

[Keh!]

The energy it gathered dissipated, and the rabbit glared at the masked man.

The kid then seemingly became confused, and asked a question.

“What? Did you really think I’d let you get out?”

[.....]

The rabbit made an astounded expression, then laughed.

Right.

There was no way they would wait for it.

Was it because it’s been too long? It looked like its senses were deteriorating.

Right then.

Paa-!

A bright light came out, and the rabbit disappeared.

Plop-

When Cho Ryu Hyang confirmed that the rabbit had disappeared, he fell on the ground with an exhausted face.

He tried to stay calm, but he was actually spending an astounding amount of mental energy just trying to stay standing.

‘But I did it.’

Cho Ryu Hyang had scattered various gems as Un Hui fought the rabbit.

There was no way to finish the formation due to the two moving so much, but when the rabbit stopped for a bit, Cho Ryu Hyang could complete the formation.

It was too complicated.

There were many, many variables to think about, but in the end, he did it.

‘Will it be able to break this, as well?’

Cho Ryu Hyang thought for a bit, then shook his head.

This formation was a variation of the Great Heavenly Ghost Formation, which was one of the strongest formations he knew of as of now.

It took a while to make, but it was impossible to destroy once the opponent became trapped.

This was the formation that the imperial palace currently was using after all.

‘But.....’

Something weighed heavily on his mind.

Since the formation was created without thinking about the power of the enemy, he couldn’t predict the result.

Un Hui approached him.

“Don’t you think it would be better to leave?”

When Cho Ryu Hyang nodded, Un Hui narrowed his eyes and looked left.

‘Someone’s coming?’

Un Hui frowned, and tightened the grip on his dagger.

He quickly expanded his senses, and counted the presences nearing them.

‘One, two.... Three, four.....’

A total of twelve people.

Their speed was increasing as well.

They were martial artists.

“They seem to be people from the Emei Sect.”

Right.

This area was controlled by the Emei Sect.

There was no reason why they wouldn't be moving.

Cho Ryu Hyang immediately stood up.

This was not the time to fight the Emei Sect.

They needed to leave.

“We need to leave.”

Cho Ryu Hyang nodded.

There was no need to provoke the other side.

Right then, Un Hui asked a question.

“What will you do with the Nine Lands Medicinal Flower?”

“The Medicinal Flower?”

“Yes. It’s a herb that only appears in legends.”

Cho Ryu Hyang thought for a bit.

The flower really was strange.

It seemed almost ethereal.

He had never seen an object with a blue number, either.

“Let’s take it.”

“Understood.”

Un Hui quickly brought Cho Ryu Hyang next to the herbal flower.

Cho Ryu Hyang nodded when he neared it.

“It would’ve been bad if we had just left.”

“Yes.”

A heavenly odor rose out of the flower.

The smell alone cleared the head, and made one relaxed.

Cho Ryu Hyang got off Un Hui’s back, and approached the flower.

But when he tried to touch the flower, he could feel the flower trembling.

The flower was avoiding his hands.

“Eh?”

When Cho Ryu Hyang paused.

Un Hui opened his mouth.

“They say that the Nine Lands Medicinal Flower actually has a consciousness of its own..... I did not expect the rumors to actually be true.”

Cho Ryu Hyang listened to Un Hui’s explanations, nodded, and

made a light comment.

“You seem to know a lot about herbs.”

Un Hui made an awkward face, and answered.

“I studied a little about it in the past.”

Actually, he didn't just study “little”.

His accomplishments when it came to medicine was enough to make Sunwu Jo Duk envious.

Un Hui didn't really talk about that, though.

“Can't we take it without killing it?”

Killing the flower seemed easy enough.

But Cho Ryu Hyang wasn't really keen on killing things.

Un Hui realized this, thought a bit, then asked a question.

“Isn't it strange that there are no trees in this area?”

Cho Ryu Hyang looked around.

He was right.

Why were there no trees around here?

He thought it was because of the effects of the formation, but that didn't seem to be it.

The answer was simple.

“It means that the roots of the Nine Lands Medicinal Flower is just that big. It managed to absorb all the nutrients in the general area.”

“Mmm.....”

In other words, they had to kill the flower to take it.

Cho Ryu Hyang paused a bit, and sighed.

“Looks like I'll need some time to think.”

He then threw a few stones around the general area.

“Come here.”

When Cho Ryu Hyang gestured with his hand, Un Hui came to him.

He could tell his master was trying to make a formation.

When Un Hui came out, Cho Ryu Hyang fiddled with a stone in his hand, and threw it to a strange place.

He threw it into the forest for some reason.

When Un Hui made a confused face.

Cho Ryu Hyang kicked a stone next to his feet.

Then, the empty field they were on just moments ago turned into a forest.

“Huh?”

When Un Hui widened his eyes and let out a breath in surprise, Cho Ryu Hyang spoke embarrassedly.

“This was my first time trying this. I’m glad it worked well. Let’s leave.”

He tried this magic-like thing for the first time?

Un Hui looked at Cho Ryu Hyang as if he was looking at a monster, then came back to his senses. He immediately put the boy on his back.

Shuaa-!

Un Hui thought as he moved through the air.

Perhaps his master was much stronger than he thought.....

Un Hui felt the light weight at his back, and swore in his mind one more time.

‘I will guard you forever.’

He wanted to see just how far the child could go.

He would guard the child no matter what happened in the future.

Even if he had to sacrifice his own life.....

That was what Un Hui thought.

Chapter 86. The Destroyed Formation

The female monks of the Emei Sect were famous for never making a move in the outside world.

Along with the Shaolin Sect and the South Sea Putuo Sect, the Emei Sect formed the three holy buddhist grounds. Because of this, their buddhist aspects were very strong.

And because of that, they were extremely isolated.

Of course, they would take action once things started to happen within their grounds.

The things that happened in the Emei Sect were their responsibility.

Just like what was happening at the moment.

Shushushu-

The experts of the Emei Sect, who were running somewhere urgently, suddenly stopped.

They looked into their eyes, and spoke.

“Amitabha..... Their presence disappeared.”

“Indeed.”

“What shall we do?”

The head of the group, Junghwa Sate, took out a rosary, and thought as she rubbed the beads.

This place wasn't that far from the main mountain of the Emei Sect.

It was definitely on the boundaries of their lands, but it wasn't so much of a place where someone could do whatever they wanted.

Especially if the source of that clash of energy from before was involved.

If an external force had invaded, there was a need to chase them down.

That was their mission.

“We'll need to check what happened.”

“Understood.”

Shushushu-!

The experts of the Emei Sect moved even faster than before.

‘At least a peak expert.’

The clash of energy that shook the air itself.

It was definitely something that could only happen when two peak experts attacked each other at full force.

While Junghwa Sate looked calm on the outside, she was actually extremely nervous.

She tightened her grip on the rosary beads, and thought.

‘Hopefully it’s not the Heavenly Demon Church.....’

There was a chance that they might find evidence of the church at the battleground.

That was something that she really didn’t want.

Their mission was to track down the invaders and dispose of them, no matter who they were.

If the invaders were the Demon Church, the results from fighting with them would be obvious.

‘Even if we find evidence.....’

In the worst case, she was thinking of ignoring the evidence to pretend nothing happened.

They couldn’t afford to even come in contact with the church.

Even if the church provoked them.

Junghwa Sate prayed with a weak face.

‘Amitabha..... Amitabha.....’

Having no power in the martial world.

There was nothing worse than that.

[There.]

One of the monks pointed to a place.

Junghwa Sate bit her lips.

She needed to be the one to find the evidence.

She would be able to cover it up as long as she found it first.

After all, if it happened to be the Demon Church, there was a need to hide the evidence.

Right then, Junghwa Sate stopped moving.

She then tried to grab the monk at the very front with a pale face.

But..... She was too late.

The monk disappeared into thin air.

“Ah?”

“W, what is.....”

When all the experts simultaneously made a shocked face.

“Step back!”

The experts of the Emei Sect moved back when they heard this.

Junghwa Sate looked around, and spoke quietly.

“.....This is a formation.”

“Formation?”

“Yes, a formation. Amitabha.....”

She experienced something like this back when she went to the Zhuge Clan.

She only experienced it once, but this really made a difference between heaven and earth.

She was able to see what was going on in an instant, because of her experience with formations in the past.

‘And.....’

Why couldn’t she see before?

The strange energy that was being emanated from the area in front of her.

Junghwa Sate cursed her idiocy, and bit her lips.

“Can’t you feel its power?”

Everyone focused at those words, but they were unable to feel anything.

Only first-rate experts could sense a formation.

‘This is bad.’

She patrolled this place frequently in the past.

It was a place that everyone in the sect passed by at least once or twice.

She was certain it didn’t have a formation in the past.

That would mean that the formation was created recently. That couldn’t be good news.

After thinking a bit, Junghwa Sate bit her lips and spoke.

“We’ll have to destroy it.”

Finding out who made the formation, and why he made it all came later.

The formation currently had one of her monks stuck in it.

Junghwa Sate took a deep breath, and put up her sleeves.

She then put out her hands forward.

Bddd-

With a sound of an old door opening, a load of pressurized air flew out of Junghwa Sate's hands.

It was the signature technique of the sect, the Great Strength Palm Strike.

But.....

Bang-!

“Kuh!”

Junghwa Sate flew back with a giant sound.

“Martial Aunt!”

“Are you alright?”

When the experts took Junghwa Sate by their arms.

Junghwa Sate's face was extremely pale.

She took a deep breath, and waved them away as she stood back up.

“.....Set up the Demon Sealing Formation. We’re going to destroy this in one go.”

“Understood!”

The Demon Sealing formation.

It was the Emei Sect’s strongest formation.

It was a formation that required at least 5 people, and its power depended quite a bit on the strength of its users.

“Activate!”

“Amitabha.....”

Kuuu-!

The energy of the ten members who created the formation condensed at the spot where Junghwa Sate was.

Junghwa Sate condensed the energy further into her hands.

She then proceeded to shape the energy into a bead-like form.

Her hands were beginning to emit a golden light.

When this golden light became immensely bright, Junghwa Sate widened her eyes.

“Haah!”

When she stretched out her hands, the Emei Sect’s Great Strength Golden Palm Strike was unleashed.

Baang-!

With an ear-deafeningly loud noise, the area in front of the monks distorted greatly.

Junghwa Sate watched this with a pale face.

‘We failed.’

The attack just now had all their strength put into it.

But the formation was powerful enough to resist that.

It just shook a bit from the attack.

When Junghwa Sate let out a sigh of amazement.

The formation began to tremble.

“Move back.”

When she said this.

Kiii-!

“Aah!”

“Kyaa!”

A sound that resembled having glass scratched appeared.

The experts of the Emei Sect shouted in pain.

At the same time, the formation in front of them shattered like glass.

Junghwa Sate became extremely confused at the sight.

‘How?’

The formation broke, even when their power was insufficient?

Something strange was going on.

Right then.

[.....Damn kid.]

A small lifeform stumbled out of the dust cloud.

A rabbit.

It stared at the eleven dumbfounded monks in front of it, then smirked.

[What?]

“.....!”

A talking rabbit?

And the thing it was holding in its hands was the monk that fell into the formation earlier.

When she was about to make a move.

The rabbit let go of the monk it was dragging with its hands.

[Eh, it was hard enough trying to survive on my own. Why'd you have to drop in a useless baggage like that? Annoying.]

“Amitabha.....”

Junghwa Sate made her subordinates move back, and made a concerned face.

That obviously wasn't a normal rabbit.

To think that much energy could come from a single rabbit.....

It's power was inhumanely large.

Just looking at it made her nervous.

[I never would've thought that I'd actually be helped by some damn monks.]

The rabbit made an annoyed face, cracked its neck a few times, and stretched a bit.

It looked at Junghwa Sate, and spoke annoyedly.

[I'll pay you back in the future. I'm just too busy at the moment..... See you later, damn monk.]

“.....”

Junghwa Sate was unable to say anything until the rabbit disappeared abruptly from its spot.

When the rabbit disappeared, she dropped down on the ground like a doll.

“Amitabha..... Amitabha.....”

She was unable to say anything other than buddhist scriptures after what she had just seen.

[Damn, I feel so embarrassed.]

The rabbit was extremely ashamed at the moment.

It never thought it would be shamed to this degree by a mere human.

[Well, at least I wasn't humiliated to the utmost, since it was a full moon.....]

Most monsters went through an increase in strength at full moon.

It was the same for the rabbit.

Since it was a moon rabbit, the full moon's effects helped it even more.

If it wasn't for that, it really would've died in the formation.

[Just what was that field.....]

The rabbit had never experienced such a terrifying thing.

The rabbit trembled a bit as it remembered the formation.

It looked down at its body, and nodded.

Its body was healing rapidly thanks to the moon.

[Tch, once I get my hands on that Dragon Pearl.....]

It should be able to recover half its strength with the pearl.

[But..... It's quite regretful.]

It didn't look like the pearl was the real thing.

Based on the tiny cracks on the pearl, it looked like the boy killed a random imugi and ate the pearl. But the pearl was still much too valuable for a human.

And the human wasn't even using it right.

It was truly a waste.

Shushushu-!

The rabbit repeatedly used teleportation to catch up to the boy.

[Hehehe..... Just you wait.]

Although the pearl was incomplete, it would still help it recover.

It should give it enough power to fly.

But.....

[Well, I did manage to catch up.....]

The rabbit scratched its ears with a troubled face.

Following the kid was good.

There was no way it'd lose track of the boy, since it never could lose a person.

But the problem lay with the place where the boy was at.

[Looks like the mortal world really became a dangerous place while I was gone.]

The rabbit looked at the area the boy was at, and frowned.

Along with the guy who wore the mask from before, there was a new guy with a similar strength as the mask man.



[And.....]

The rabbit frowned even more.

No one in the house the boy was at was normal.

There were a lot of them in the first place, but each and every one of these people were quite strong.

[Damn.....]

That kid seemed to be an important person among the humans.

It couldn't just charge in through the front, because these people were so strong.

To be honest, it wasn't confident that it could survive in there with its current strength.

[What shall I do, then.....]

It needed to meet the child without having anyone notice.

What could it do to achieve that?

After a moment of thought, the rabbit's eyes began to gleam.

It had thought of a pretty good plan.

Chapter 87. An Unexpected Meeting

It was a tiring day.

Cho Ryu Hyang stretched a bit, and lay down on his bed.

Plop-!

He could feel Un Hui's presense near him.

He was bothered by it in the beginning, but the man's presence comforted him now.

He had developed trust in the man.

‘Trust.....’

Right.

He developed such feelings towards Un Hui.

Cho Ryu Hyang scratched his cheeks, and rolled on the bed.

It really was too big for him.

He looked up at the ceiling from the bed.

At that moment, he thought of something, and smiled.

“Moon Rabbit.....”

When the rabbit took out its pestle, the strangeness of it all almost made him laugh.

But the only reason he didn't do so was because of the insane amount of energy that emanated from the rabbit.

And.....

‘It was definitely enjoying it.’

The rabbit looked happy as it fought Un Hui.

It was enjoying the fight.

Unlike its cute looks, it was actually a vicious creature.

But why did the rabbit come at him?

He still wasn't able to figure out why.

After thinking a bit more about the rabbit. Cho Ryu Hyang shook

his head.

There was no need to think about the rabbit anymore.

‘Would it be about now?’

At this time, the rabbit should’ve reached the end part of the formation. It probably perished at this point.

Even if that rabbit survived till now, it still wouldn’t be able to get out alive.

That was because Cho Ryu Hyang had changed the end of the formation completely.

‘Disappear with the formation.’

He wasn’t interested in the rabbit at all now.

In his eyes, the rabbit was a dangerous existence.

That dangerous existence came at him without any hesitation.

Because of that, Cho Ryu Hyang was unhesitant to go all out in killing it.

‘The second gate of the 36 gates.....’

The formation had a total of 40 gates, and every time a new door opened, a calamity would strike.

Out of all those gates, there was the 36th gate.

Cho Ryu Hyang had messed around a little with the gate.

He had made the immense energy contained on the other side of the gate go berserk.

As he had thrown in something that wasn't supposed to be in the formation within that gate, it was entirely possible that the formation was going to explode.

It was his first time attempting this, but he was confident that he would succeed.

Cho Ryu Hyang paused.

‘Why did I think it would go well?’

Cho Ryu Hyang wondered as he lay down.

He just felt it would go well.

He just felt it.

Normally, he wouldn't trust in his feelings like this.

He was unable to trust things like this.

‘And yet, I trusted them.’

Cho Ryu Hyang made a dazed face for a moment.

Come to think of it, anything he tried out in his head always became reality.

‘Is it because I can see the world with numbers....?’

Perhaps it was because of that.

Cho Ryu Hyang thought this much, then began to visualize the fight between Un Hui and the rabbit in his head.

Since he didn't miss one beat of the battle, he was able to visualize it perfectly.

‘I would've done it like this here.....’

He thought this at one point as he watched the fight.

Then, he lifted his head out of curiosity.

‘Would it work?’

Could he become the fighter in this battle?

There was a 50/50 chance that this was possible. It wouldn't be bad to try it.

After all, this was just imagining things, wasn't it?

Cho Ryu Hyang began to focus.

After a moment, his eyes began to sparkle.

‘It worked!’

He tried fighting from the rabbit's point of view, then slowly switched to Un Hui.

When he became used to it, he even became a third party and fought both of them.

This truly was a strange experience.

He was able to use the powerful moves of the Shura Environment and the Moon Edge Blade Technique.

They were moves that he was unable to use as of now because of his insufficient strength.

All of those moves were being executed now.

‘Amazing.’

Cho Ryu Hyang was astonished.

Like this, Cho Ryu Hyang attained the greatest method of training–

He attained heartfelt thought (心想).

[Sleep, you little bastard.....]

The rabbit stared at the house the boy was in from the mountains.

The rabbit’s eyes were very special.

Righteous Flamesteel Eyes (火正金眼).

They were eyes that were quite similar to the Thousand Li Eyes

(千里眼).

Although Cho Ryu Hyang was in the house, the rabbit could still see him.

It could even see the threadlines on Cho Ryu Hyang's clothing.

Buildings or walls were not a problem.

At this distance, it could see just about everything.

[Sonuvah.....]

That bastard was rolling on the bed without sleeping from awhile back.

It would only be able to do what it wanted if the boy was asleep.....

As the rabbit complained like so,

Cho Ryu Hyang finally went to sleep.

The rabbit looked at this quietly for a moment, then grinned.

[Shall we go in, then?]

It didn't know if the spell would work, since it had been a while since it last used it.

But since it was just using it on a boy, there was no way it could fail.

The rabbit took a few breaths, and refrained from laughter.

It was having fun.

It couldn't wait to teach the boy a lesson.

'Kuhehehe, I need to calm down.'

It wouldn't do to get this excited already.

Things would only get better from now. It couldn't be satisfied with just this.

The rabbit calmed its heart, and listened carefully for a moment.

Then, it leaned forward, as if it was going to fall on its face.

When it did so, its body turned into white mist, and flowed into the garden.

The mist advanced into Cho Ryu Hyang's shelter.

But.....

‘Eh?’

The rabbit became surprised.

The boy was in front of it, but it couldn't get near the boy at all.

The rabbit almost swore when it observed this phenomenon a bit.

‘Shoot! It's a formation!’

The boy was prepared. He even put a formation around him when sleeping.

Was there even a need to be this careful?

It just couldn't understand the boy.

After looking at the formation for a bit, the rabbit's eyes sparkled.

‘There's a hole?’

Just one place.

At the ceiling, there was a hole.

A hole just big enough for a single person.

‘Puhehe, I knew it. Did you think you could fool your elder?’

The rabbit refrained itself from laughter.

Its eyes were able to see through the truth.

It would be able to notice even the tiniest holes.

When it tried to enter the hole joyfully, it was able to see why the boy created the hole.

‘Keke, so it was for this masked person.’

A hole for one person.

Above that hole was Un Hui.

The rabbit looked down at Un Hui, and grinned.

The magic it was currently using, the Hidden Cloud Technique, was a very difficult magic technique.

Even if Un Hui was a harmonious expert, he was still human.

The technique the rabbit was using wasn't something humans could see through.

The rabbit flew laps around Un Hui with a prideful face.

Although Un Hui wasn't able to see it, the rabbit made fun of the man as much as it liked, then flew into the formation.

‘Kehehe, how shall I annoy him?’

After watching Cho Ryu Hyang for a bit, the rabbit smiled evilly and ran towards the boy.

Shuuu-!

“Mm.....”

Cho Ryu Hyang frowned a bit when the white mist entered his nose.

But he was unable to wake up, and went back to sleep with a peaceful face.

[What the hell is this?]

It managed to get into the boy's mind, but all it could see was darkness.

To think it would be this dark...

The rabbit was amazed by the boy's corrupt mind, and walked.

How long had it walked?

It was just about ten steps.

At that point, the rabbit turned its head sideways.

[So, who are you?]

When the rabbit said this, the space next to it distorted, and an old man with a fan appeared.

Zhuge Liang.

He had appeared.

He looked at the rabbit with a gaze of pity.

“Tch, I knew you’d come here, Pian Mu.”

The rabbit’s eyes widened in surprise.

[Eh? How did you know my name?]

Zhuge Liang smiled faintly.

“It’s written on your head, is it not?”

The rabbit, taken aback by the old man’s answer, moved back a step, and rubbed its head.

At that moment.

The ground the rabbit had been standing on started to distort.

Something had been activated.

[You, you bastard.....]

It had realized that it fell into a trap.

At the same time, it realized what this trap was, and smiled

mockingly.

[You were a formations expert? Did you really think normal formations would work on me? Who did you think I am?]

Zhuge Liang shook his head with an arrogant face.

“Of course I wouldn’t be injure you with formations. After all, you are still a god.”

The rabbit’s eyes twitched.

How did this guy know about it so well?

And how did he manage to create an alternate dimension in somebody else’s mind?

It suddenly became nervous.

“But you see, this isn’t a formation. It was something that I made because of some annoying guest who came some time ago. It wouldn’t be as disappointing as you might believe.”

Crack-!

A hole formed on the ground.

A tornado could be seen inside of it.

The rabbit tried to get out, but clicked its tongue when it felt the sucking power of the tornado.

It looked at Zhuge Liang, and spoke.

[Formations cannot harm me. This is a useless act, human.]

“Well..... Who knows.”

The rabbit swore, and got sucked into the hole.

The hole then disappeared, and everything became normal again.

Zhuce Liang looked at the spot where the rabbit used to stand, and faintly smiled.

“Do not look upon humans lightly, monster god. This will be the small lesson I shall teach you this day.”

He closed his eyes, thought a bit, and spoke with a disappointed tone.

“I didn’t want to get involved with the boy’s affairs.....”

It would be cheating if he helped the boy too much.

Since getting his help would make things too easy, Zhuge Liang did not try to get himself involved with outside matters.

Well, he couldn't help but intervene at situations like this, though.....

“There's no choice if the boy keeps pulling in trouble like this.”

Other than that, how should he take care of the rabbit?

He flapped the fan a few times as he thought, and made up his mind.

The rabbit was something that lived pridefully all its life.

There was a need to humble it a bit.

“Doing that should help the boy a bit.”

Come to think of it, having a strange thing like this near the boy should be useful.

Zhuge Liang thought this as he observed the rabbit struggle in the hellhole he had created.



Chapter 88. Cho Ryu Hyang's First Business Venture

“Ow..... my body hurts so much.”

The man who was stretching while looking into the mirror, was none other than the heir of the North Sea Ice Palace, Juk Hyul Myung.

He stretched a few times, and cracked his neck a bit.

Crack-

Craack-!

After stretching all his muscles, Juk Hyul Myung grinned a toothy grin.

“Fufu, I have revived completely. Perfect.”

A lot of things went wrong in his plan because of his battle with Shi Yup.

But after much rest, he had completely recovered.

Juk Hyul Myung admired his self through the mirror, as he sang to himself.

Then, he moved his gaze down to his chest.

After looking at it for a bit, he licked his lips, and covered up his chest with his clothes.

The scar was quite hard to see, as it was well-hidden by the clothes.

But he would never be able to forget it.

“Well, I learned a good lesson from it, so it’s all good, I guess.”

He tried to erase it, but it didn’t really work.

After all, the wound was quite big.

It was sad that his beautiful body was injured, but since he learned something from it, he was able to let it go.

“I can take a wound like this.”

It was the first time he got a scar from someone.

This motivated him very much.

“This won’t happen ever again.”

As he resolved himself, someone began to knock.

Knock knock-

As Juk Hyul Myung was able to sense the person, he didn’t bother responding.

He just kept admiring the mirror.

Knock knock knock-!

The sound of the doorknock got louder.

Juk Hyul Myung ignored it, and kept praising himself through the mirror.

Soon enough, a girl walked in without permission and complained.

“.....Senior brother, isn’t this humanely too much? You should at least pretend to notice me. You make me really feel bad.”

“You really don’t realize how much courage it takes for me to look at an ugly person like you, do you?”

“.....tch.”

Juk Hyul Myung’s Junior Sister, Ju Da Hye, pouted.

Only then did Juk Hyul Myung turn around.

“Ehh? What’s up with that face, junior sister? You look very discontent?”

When Juk Hyul Myung said this with a threatening tone, Ju Da Hye inched backwards.

Then she shouted out in fear.

“.....D, don’t forget I’m your savior!”

Juk Hyul Myung stopped.

He then spoke with a tired face.

“Damn, so you managed to find a weakness of mine.”

When it looked like Juk Hyul Myung wasn’t going to tease her, Ju Da Hye lifted her head and grinned.

“Ehehe, senior brother~”

“What? Why are you smiling like that?”

“Senior brotherrr~!”

Ju Da Hye suddenly latched onto Juk Hyul Myung’s waist.



Juk Hyul Myung turned pale.

“Junior sister, aren’t you going a little too far?”

“Eh? What? Are you going to hit me? Your savior?”

When Ju Da Hye said this, Juk Hyul Myung's cheeks twitched a bit.

He couldn't hit her.

Normally, he'd attack her, but he just couldn't this time.

This made him extremely pained.

'Shi Yup..... I will have my revenge.'

As Juk Hyul Myung strengthened his resolve to have his revenge,

Ju Da Hye buried her face into Juk Hyul Myung's chest, and muttered to herself.

"When else would I be able to touch you, other than now? If the sisters in the palace heard of this, they'd be so jealous! Hehe, it's good that I came here with you."

".....Oh my, you think completely different from me."

Juk Hyul Myung frowned when he realized Ju Da Hye wasn't going to let him go.

At that point, Ju Da Hyu blushed a bit, and let go.

“Someone called.”

“About time. It’s been too long.”

He went missing at a critical time.

Juk Hyul Myung stretched out his hand, disregarding Ju Da Hye’s blushed face.

“Give it.”

Ju Da Hye made a slightly disappointed face, then gave him a piece of paper.

“Let’s read, shall we.....”

The paper was encrypted, but since Juk Hyul Myung memorized everything already, it was easy for him to decode it.

His eyes began flashing as he read.

“Hoh? So that great heir of the church is in Sichuan?”

“Yes. I think he came as the representative.”

“How daring.”

It was unexpected.

Why would a heir of the church come out to a dangerous place like this?

“Teacher wants him eliminated.”

Obviously.

Pretty much everyone in the world except the church was probably thinking this.

‘We can’t create a new Gongson Chun Gi.’

The heir of the church, and the student of Gongson Chun Gi. That enough made it worth risking one’s life to kill the boy.

Juk Hyul Myung thought this as he stroked his chin, and smiled.

‘How strong are you?’

There was no information whatsoever about the heir.

That was strange.

No one knew the heir's gender, age, habits, or likes. There wasn't even basic info.

That just served to boost his expectations.

It made him believe that the heir would be worthy of having Gongson Chun Gi as a teacher.

‘But.....’

It wouldn't happen a second time.

A monster like Gongson Chun Gi mustn't live on.

There was a need to strike the roots when it was still young.

Everyone moved towards Sichuan while thinking this.

Cho Ryu Hyang realized that he actually felt quite exhausted when he woke up.

It was actually tiring to even lift a finger.

‘What happened?’

The highest level of training, the heartfelt thought, didn't just train one through imagination. The imagination actually managed to train the body a bit, as well.

This was why he felt so tired, but Cho Ryu Hyang failed to realize this.

“Nnn.....”

Cho Ryu Hyang tried to stand, but gave up.

He then utilized the Moon Edge Blade Technique as he lay down.

The Moon Edge Blade Technique allowed for perfect control of the body.

When the clear, refreshing energy flowed through the body, his tired body quickly became refreshed.

After realizing that he was no longer tired, Cho Ryu Hyang stood up.

There were a lot of things to do today.

When Cho Ryu Hyang walked out, No Jin Nyung greeted him.

“No Jin Nyung greets his lord.”

Cho Ryu Hyang faintly smiled at No Jin Nyung’s professional attitude.

“Did you sleep well?”

“Yes.”

“Then, please take care of me well.”

“Hehe, understood, my lord.”

No Jin Nyung followed Cho Ryu Hyang with a grin.

He then widened his eyes, and carefully observed his surroundings.

Cho Ryu Hyang smiled when he saw this, and walked towards the Greeting Hall.

“This one greets the heir.”

When he arrived, Sunwu Cho Rin greet him immediately.

Cho Ryu Hyang lifted his hand as a greeting, and spoke.

“Did he come?”

“Yes. He is waiting for you inside.”

“Bring him here, then.”

“Understood.”

Cho Ryu Hyang drank some tea as he waited.

Soon, a pale, scar-faced man entered the room.

The man flinched when he saw Cho Ryu Hyang, then realized his mistake, and bowed.

“The master of the Black Serpent Guild, Gal Mun Hyuk, greets the heir.”

“It is nice to meet you. I am Cho Ryu Hyang.”

Gal Mun Hyuk sweat profusely.

To think the heir was a mere boy.....

‘Just how much talent does he have.....?’

There were no information on the heir in the martial world.

It was partly thanks to the ability of the church to be able to control information, but it also had to do with the fact that no one was confident enough to penetrate into the church to get info.

“I have heard that you controlled the salt merchants in the area.”

Gal Mun Hyuk came back to senses at Cho Ryu Hyang’s words.

He raised his head, and looked at the heir.

He could see the heir looking down on him.

At that moment, he became very confused.

‘What the? There aren’t any traces of him ever training martial arts?’

For a man, the more powerful he gets, the larger his temple became.

But there was no traces of that happening for Cho Ryu Hyang.

There were only two cases of this happening.

The boy didn't know martial arts,

Or he was so powerful, it was unable for him to sense it.

‘Could he be a harmonious expert? At that age?’

It seemed possible, as the heir was the student of Gongson Chun Gi's.

Once he thought this far, he unconsciously sucked in, and opened his mouth.

“Right, I am the one who controls the salt in the black market.”

He spoke in a very polite tone.

Cho Ryu Hyang stared at the documents in front of him, and opened his mouth.

“So you are trying to work with us, but would that be alright? The Black Moon Guild would try to take revenge.....”

The Black Serpent Guild and the Black Moon Guild actually held some connections.

The Black Serpent Guild operated under the Black Moon Guild's protection.

Changing sides like this would definitely enrage the Black Moon Guild.

Gal Mun Hyuk grinned.

He knew how much risk he was taking.

But he needed to do this.

If he wanted to get stronger, he needed to be prepared for danger.

Gal Mun Hyuk opened his mouth.

“Guys like us who are at the bottom needs to know who is the strong one in this era. We know who we need to stick to in order to continue to survive in Sichuan in the future.”

Cho Ryu Hyang put down the documents, and looked at Gal Mun Hyuk.

Although the man was smiling pitifully, his eyes were extremely calm.

The man was testing him out.

He wanted to see how Cho Ryu Hyang would respond.

‘So he wants to feel us out?’

It looked like the man wasn’t just an idiot.

Controlling up to thirty percent of the salt in Sichuan was no small feat.

It wouldn’t be good if an unintelligent man took care of such a thing.

Cho Ryu Hyang would need an intelligent man to serve him in the future.

“Is that the only reason why you want to work with us?”

“Of course. Being safe is at the top of my priorities. I firmly believe the church would be able to help us far more than the Black Moon Guild.”

Cho Ryu Hyang smiled.

He then opened his mouth with a cold voice.

“That’s not all you want though, is it now?”

“.....What?”

“Did you not want complete monopoly over the salt of the church?”

“.....”

Gal Mun Hyuk paused a bit.

He didn't know they'd get to the main point this early.

‘This kid.....’

It looked like he was seen through.

He didn't know how much salt the church could acquire, but there was no doubt the amount would be large.

But then grabbing onto this opportunity made him too afraid of the consequences.

As Gal Mun Hyuk hesitated, Cho Ryu Hyang continued to talk.

“What happens if we decide not to work with you?”

“.....!”

Gal Mun Hyuk frowned.

If they refuse his offer here, things would go very badly for him.

The Black Moon Guild definitely wouldn't get go of someone who tried to betray them.

If the church steps out of this, his guild would get in much trouble.

‘Shoot.’

When Gal Mun Hyuk's face turned pale, Cho Ryu Hyang opened his mouth.

“I think it's a fitting time to talk about our terms, is it not?”

The trade with Gal Mun Hyuk.

This would be the first thing Cho Ryu Hyang would do in Sichuan.

Chapter 89. Cho Ryu Hyang And Maksu

The first deal that was struck with Gal Mun Hyuk caused much excitement in the church.

It had gained approval from the scholars who had come to support the growth of the Sichuan branch of the church.

“This truly is an amazing deal, my lord.”

The middle-aged scholar who was analyzing the contract spoke excitedly.

He was Jung Yigun, who was temporarily taking care of the Sichuan branch of the church.

“We earned much more than we initially expected. If things keep going like this, we would be able to complete the expansion 2, or even 3 months earlier than expected.”

It was much easier to take over an existing business, rather than create a new one.

This was something that even kids knew.

The deal that Cho Ryu Hyang had just struck with Gal Mun Hyuk was just that useful to the church.

It was an amazing result.

However, while others were praising Cho Ryu Hyang endlessly for his feats, Cho Ryu Hyang himself looked at the contract with a concerned expression.

‘Something’s strange.’

Something got on his mind since a while back.

What was it?

Something strange dug at his mind, but he just couldn’t figure out what it was.

Something extremely filthy, and dangerous.

There was never a case where something good happened when he smelled this.

“.....Something’s strange.”

“Hm? Is there something wrong?”

Jung Yigun looked at Cho Ryu Hyang curiously.

Just what was the problem here?

Everything was going so well for the church.

Thanks to Gal Mun Hyuk, they were able to sell large quantities of salt in the black market, and since they managed to get the list of some of the greater merchants in the area, they were able to secure themselves firmly in the city.

So why?

‘Our young heir seems to be very greedy.’

Cho Ryu Hyang thought carefully as Jung Yigun thought this of the heir.

It felt like he missed something important.

‘So what is that?’

After thinking for a long time, Cho Ryu Hyang closed his eyes.

He just felt nervous for now, but if he didn’t take care of the problem as soon as possible, it would most likely come at it like a giant sword.

‘What are you...?’

Cho Ryu Hyang concentrated as much as he could in order to take out something from the darkness.

How much time had passed?

Cho Ryu Hyang opened his eyes, and stood up.

He looked up at the ceiling, and opened his mouth.

“I’m going to need your help.”

[What is it, my lord?]

“Follow him. He definitely has something behind him.”

[Gal Mun Hyuk?]

“Yes.”

[How long do I have to watch him?]

Cho Ryu Hyang calculated something in his mind, then opened his mouth with a frown.

“Four days. If nothing happens during that time, you can come back.”

[Understood.]

As Un Hui tried to leave, Cho Ryu Hyang put up his hands to stop the man.

“Be careful. They might have a strong enemy on their side. No, if my prediction is correct, they should definitely have one. An expert that you wouldn’t be able to face alone.”

Un Hui made a concerned face.

He didn’t know how it worked, but the heir seemed to have the power to look into the future.

A person like that warned him to be careful.

This mission of his was definitely not going to be simple.

“This mission may endanger your life. But.....”

Cho Ryu Hyang stopped for a moment, and looked at Un Hui with a complicated gaze.

He bit his lips, and spoke with a determined face.

“Can I trust that you’d come back safely?”

Un Hui looked at Cho Ryu Hyang for a moment.

The boy's eyes were clear and unshaken. Un Hui stepped down onto the floor, and bowed to Cho Ryu Hyang.

“.....Your guard promises to come back in four days.”

“I trust that you will.”

“Understood.”

Un Hui held his bow for a moment as he stared at No Jin Nyung with an unfaithful gaze.

He felt that No Jin Nyung was a bit unsuitable to protect Cho Ryu Hyang for now.

‘What the hell are you looking at?’

No Jin Nyung looked at Un Hui with an annoyed face as well.

‘I hope he breaks something when he comes back.’

Although the heir warned Un Hui that this mission would be exceedingly dangerous, No Jin Nyung was well aware of how strong Un Hui was.

He just couldn't believe that such a cold blooded man could actually get beat up anywhere.

Un Hui looked at No Jin Nyung's childish face, and sighed inside.

Even though No Jin Nyung was a bit lacking, the man was still a harmonious expert.

There was no way Cho Ryu Hyang could get in any real danger.

He still felt a bit nervous, but there was no choice.

Un Hui began to move as he tried to console himself inside.

Cho Ryu Hyang began thinking as he watched Un Hui fade off into the distance.

'This is dangerous.'

But there was no choice.

The other side had concealed themselves pretty well.

Cho Ryu Hyang sat down on his chair, and made a tired face.

'There was no way things were going to be this easy, anyway.'

Gal Mun Hyuk was a man who controlled up to a thirty percent of the salt in Sichuan.

A man like that actually succumbed to a child's threats?

'There's no way.'

All this so far was just a suspicion.

A suspicion of a person who encountered a huge stroke of fortune.

Right then, he realized something.

Why did Gal Mun Hyuk try to side with the church?

'Did he really just want to monopolize the salt?'

It seemed plausible, but when he thought about it, it was too big of a risk to take.

After thinking a bit more, Cho Ryu Hyang reached a conclusion.

There definitely was someone at Gal Mun Hyuk's back.

When he realized this, all of his questions were resolved.

Even so, Cho Ryu Hyang desperately wished that his prediction was wrong.

‘Crap.....’

If his prediction was correct, Un Hui was going to be in great danger.

After thinking a bit, Cho Ryu Hyang stood up.

“I’m going to rest a bit.”

“.....What shall we do with the contract?”

When Jung Yigun carefully asked this, Cho Ryu Hyang opened his mouth.

“We’ll hold it off for four days.”

“Yes, understood.”

Cho Ryu Hyang left Jung Yigun behind, and headed outside.

At the back of the building, there was a garden that greatly resembled the one in the church. There was even an artificial pond that used to be outside his shelter.

It was all created due to the kindness of Gongson Chun Gi.

Cho Ryu Hyang sat on the edge of the pagoda of the garden, and closed his eyes.

No Jin Nyung looked around carefully, trying to see if there was any danger.

Right then.

Cho Ryu hyang, who had been sitting dazedly on the pagoda, suddenly stood up.

He ran to the other side of the pagoda, and began looking somewhere.

No Jin Nyung made a strange face at Cho Ryu Hyang's actions.

“Is something wrong?”

“.....”

Cho Ryu Hyang didn't say anything, and looked at No Jin Nyung

with a pale face.

No Jin Nyung became confused.

‘What, is he scared?’

If No Jin Nyung was right, the heir was pretty afraid right now.

Why?

Wasn't the heir someone who fought him head-on unhesitatingly?

So why was he making such a face?

No Jin Nyung calmly walked up to the place that Cho Ryu Hyang was looking at.

When he walked over, a small, cute rabbit jumped out of the bush.

“Nn?”

What?

The heir actually got afraid of something like this?

‘Pff! So the young master can be like a child at times.’

No Jin Nyung thought CHo Ryu Hyang’s actions to be quite cute, and tried to hug the rabbit.

Right before he did so, however, Cho Ryu Hyang shouted.

“Stop!”

No Jin Nyung felt the urgency contained within Cho Ryu Hyang’s voice, and looked back.

He could see Cho Ryu Hyang walking towards him.

“What do you want?”

“What?”

Cho Ryu Hyang motioned No Jin Nyung away with his hand as he glared at the rabbit.

The rabbit looked at Cho Ryu Hyang with an innocent face.

But then.

[Kehehe, don't be so scared, kid. I'm not going to hurt you.]

Cho Ryu Hyang flinched when he heard the rabbit's voice in his head.

The rabbit just kept acting like a normal 'rabbit' on the outside.

It picked its nose using its cute front paws, and opened its mouth.

[Kid, let's make a deal.]

“What deal?”

[It's kind of problematic for me to fight you here, actually. I still haven't recovered completely..... It would be troublesome to fight the people here.]

Cho Ryu Hyang narrowed his eyes.

He was trying to discern the rabbit's motives.

[Keke, don't look at me like that. My objective is simple. I desperately need that dragon's pearl in your body.]

Dragon pearl?

Cho Ryu Hyang thought of the bead inside his dantian.

He had suspected that it might be a dragon pearl, but he didn't actually think that was the case till now.

‘A dragon's pearl.....’

Cho Ryu Hyang looked down at his dantian with an amazed face.

The rabbit continued talking.

[I had tried to take the pearl by force..... but I managed to find a different way to do things.]

The rabbit needed the pearl in order to recover.

That was why it had entered the boy's dream, but when it did so, it got horribly beat up by that strange old man.

‘And I made a ‘promise’ with the old man in there.’

The rabbit scratched the back of its head.

A promise between beings like those were worth more than a thousand gold.

The demands of the old man was simple.

It was to simply observe the growth of the child without causing trouble.

‘And the reward for that is.....’

The old man promised not to interfere if it took the dragon pearl after the boy’s death.

It would seem that the rabbit lost a lot from this exchange, but that wasn’t the case.

A human’s lifespan was quite short.

And the kid could die from outside matters as well.

Also, the rabbit would still be able to recover faster than normal just by being near the pearl.

It wasn’t that bad of a deal.

‘But who really is that old man?’

The old man was a person who had surpassed human limits since long ago.

And since the old man had thrown away his mortality using a completely unconventional way, the rabbit felt extremely

uncomfortable fighting the man.

Although it didn't want to admit it, it was true that it was easier for it to accept a deal like this rather than fight that old man.

‘Just what is it thinking?’

Cho Ryu Hyang looked at the rabbit with careful eyes.

It would be dangerous fighting that monstrous rabbit without Un Hui.

He knew very well No Jin Nyung wouldn't be able to fight the thing.

But calling others here to fight this thing would cause too much commotion.

He didn't want to do any of this.

“What is your purpose?”

[I'm planning on taking the pearl after your death. How is it?]

“.....Is that all?”

This was too simple.

When Cho Ryu Hyang frowned, the rabbit spoke.

[But, I'm going to have to observe you from close by at all times. It would be troublesome if you left.]

Cho Ryu Hyang began to think.

It would definitely pressure him a bit to have such a monster near him at all times.

But..... once he thought of something, he was able to smile.

“You said this was a ‘deal’, correct?”

The rabbit nodded.

Cho Ryu Hyang's smile grew wider.

The smile resembled the evil smile that Gongson Chun Gi had on his face when performing a prank on Cho Ryu Hyang.

“I accept your proposal. But I have a condition as well.”

[What is it?]

“You must act like a normal rabbit no matter what. When I’m near you, at least.”

The rabbit tilted its head in confusion.

[Is that it? That’s simple enough. I accept.]

Cho Ryu Hyang quickly spoke.

“Good, with this, the deal is complete. Also, I had heard that deals or promises like this was worth your own lives for beings like you. Is that true?”

The rabbit began to feel a bit uncomfortable, but it nodded calmly anyway.

For beings like it, promises were worth their own lives.

[Are you trying to scare me, damn kid?]

“Did you actually think that? I was just confirming things.”

Cho Ryu Hyang smiled strangely as he responded.

The rabbit felt uncomfortable when it saw that smile.

‘The conditions given to me are very easy. Nothing’s wrong with

it.'

The rabbit tried to organize its thoughts.

At that point in time, however, everyone in the area sensed a presence, and looked sideways.

“Ah? Lord heir, so you were here?”

Cho Ryu Hyang erased the smile off of his face when he saw the person who had appeared.

‘Gongson Ahri.....’

Cho Ryu Hyang tried hard to erase the strange feelings he got when looking at Gongson Ahri.

“Why are you here?”

“Ah, I came out for a short walk. I like how much this place resembles the church.”

Gongson Ahri smiled innocently as she said this.

Cho Ryu Hyang turned away without realizing it when he saw the girl's smile.

Gongson Ahri spotted a rabbit at that moment, and widened her eyes.

“Eh? A rabbit? Is it something you’re taking care of?”

“Ah..... yes.”

[Crazy bastard. You? Raise me?]

When the rabbit frowned in displeasure,

Gongson Ahri asked a question.

“Can I touch it?”

“.....Yes?”

Gongson Ahri seemed to take Cho Ryu Hyang’s surprised response as a ‘yes’.

She smiled brightly, and rubbed the rabbit’s cheeks.



“Heeh, it’s very soft. What’s it’s name?”

The rabbit widened its mouth out of extreme surprise because of how Gongson Ahri was treating it.

Cho Ryu Hyang quickly gathered himself.

Then, he looked at the rabbit’s face, and smiled evilly.

“Maksu..... it’s name is Maksu.”

[.....!]

The rabbit's eyes shook greatly.

It remembered Sun Wukong's words when hearing Cho Ryu Hyang's words.

– If you get lucky enough to find a person who renames you in the future, you might be able to become unsealed a bit faster. Have hope, cutie.

As the rabbit looked at Cho Ryu Hyang with a dumbstruck face, Gongson Ahri simply kept rubbing its cheeks.

“Maksu..... what a nice name.”

[.....]

The rabbit.

No, the being that was to be called Maksu from now on, just sat there with a depressed expression.

It was just looking at its new name over and over again in its mind.

Chapter 90. Collision

Un Hui thought that his calmness was his greatest virtue.

It was an ability that allowed him to access the situation calmly at all times.

Perhaps some people would say that Un Hui was excessively calm, but Un Hui didn't think that was a problem.

Especially at times like these.

‘So today's the fourth day.....’

Was the heir's prediction wrong?

Galm Mun Hyuk didn't really do much.

He checked up on his subordinates at his company every day, recorded their losses and profits in his book, and traded goods with different merchants.

Unlike how he acted in front of Cho Ryu Hyang, he was quick, cold, and efficient.

‘So he was hiding his true self.....’

When it came to work, this man was extremely talented. He seemed to care much about his family as well.

He realized how useful of a man this Gal Mun Hyuk was, but he learned nothing else about the man.

But Un Hui stayed patient, and didn't let his guard down.

‘I'll watch him till dawn.’

There was still plenty of time before night.

Before then, many things could happen.

And around evening, something happened.

Gal Mun Hyuk began to act strangely.

‘He's getting on a carriage? At this time?’

He didn't know when the man prepared it, but Gal Mun Hyuk moved to the back of his house, and got on a carriage that was parked there.

Un Hui melted into the roof of the carriage, and thought a bit.

‘I should be careful.’

Something was different.

He realized that the man was about to do something.

The carriage that held Gal Mun Hyuk and Un Hui moved away from the city, and kept moving for a long time.

Soon enough, they reached a small mountain building, and stopped.

‘Secret Mountain Hut.....’

It had a strange name.

Multiple thoughts floated up in his mind, but Un Hui got rid of those thoughts for now, and lowered his presence as much as possible.

He then calmly continued to watch Gal Mun Hyuk.

Gal Mun Hyuk got off the carriage, then walked into the building, completely ignoring the guards in front.

The guards did not stop the man.

When he saw those guards, Un Hui licked his lips.

‘First-rates.....’

They were just guards.

But they were using four first-rates as guards?

This was strange.

Un Hui lowered his presence even more, and followed behind Gal Mun Hyuk.

“Gal Mun Hyuk greets the master.”

Un Hui frowned as he looked at Gal mUn Hyuk bow.

There were far too many experts in this one building.

‘Thirty experts inside..... if I count those outside as well, there’s more than a hundred.’

Un Hui turned even more cautious.

Most of them were close to becoming peak experts.

This proved that the ones behind Gal Mun Hyuk were far

stronger than he initially expected.

“Right. So how was the heir?”

Gal Mun Hyuk respectfully looked up at the man at the highest seat in the building, and opened his mouth.

“The man was different from anything you had expected.”

“Hoh, really now? That’s interesting.”

The man at the top seat.

He seemed quite young compared to the position he held.

Un Hui looked at the young man for a bit, then frowned even more.

‘He didn’t learn martial arts?’

Un Hui was a harmonious expert.

He could detect just about anyone who had learned martial arts.

But he couldn’t detect any signs of martial arts from that man.

That man did not learn any martial arts at all.

‘But.....’

What should he call it?

He could feel a sense of alienation from the man.

‘What is it?’

That man seemed far too relaxed, even as a man who never learned martial arts.

Gal Mun Hyuk was a first-rate expert.

But the man was actually managing to pressure Gal Mun Hyuk?

And the presence of that man encased the entire building.

This was extremely strange.

As Un Hui thought of the strange points of this young man,

the young man opened his mouth.

“So, how was he different? The heir, that is.”

“The heir was an extremely young child. Although the boy seemed smart, but he was still a child.”

“Really?”

The young man blinked a few times, and scratched the back of his head.

“I don’t really like killing children..... and since the church is heavily guarded, it would be hard to try and kill him.”

When the man hesitated a bit, Gal Mun Hyuk spoke.

“I made a deal with that child. We will have a chance to kill him soon. As there are matters where the heir will have to appear directly, there will be cases where he exposes himself.”

“Then leak the date and time to the North Sea Ice Palace, Nanman Beast Gate, the Black Moon Guild, and the Alliance. Don’t forget anyone. They will then kill the heir for us.”

Un Hui’s eyes lit up with intense fire.

He had just heard of the plans to kill the heir.

And strangely enough, they weren’t affiliated with the four great powers.

‘Who are they?’

As Un Hui looked on with a confused face, Gal Mun Hyuk bowed respectfully and spoke.

“Understood. I will leak the information to the four places.”

“We will move after they fight. We have to take everyone out, after all.”

“Understood.”

“The General will go himself as well. He will appear on the battlefield with the strongest troop in the world, so you may go assist us at that time as well.”

Un Hui’s eyes widened.

Once he heard of the word “General”, he was reminded of a single group.

‘The imperial palace!’

At that moment, a shock ran down Un Hui’s body.

At the same time, somebody appeared like a shadow directly

behind the young man.

“He was tailed.”

“What?”

“That idiot got tailed.”

As soon as those words were said, a light shone out.

Shuiii-!

With a sharp sound, a frightening amount of sword qi exploded from the back of the young man.

As Un Hui was already on guard, he was able to dodge it easily.

Baang-!

The roof collapsed, and rocks flew everywhere.

From inside the dust cloud, Un Hui stared out with a cold gaze.

“What the? He’s stronger than I thought?”

The man who walked out from the back of the young man was a

thin man with a very feminine appearance.

His pale, white skin with his red lips made others feel sexually attracted to to the man.



“I had wanted to fight a harmonious expert at least once.... this is a good chance.”

“Eh? He’s a harmonious expert?”

“Yeah. He’s at least as strong as me. This is going to be quite interesting.”

The pale-skinned man licked his lips, and narrowed his eyes.

“That man’s actually as strong as you, Tai (太) Gonggong (公公)?”

“Yeah. But don’t worry. I’m confident in being able to protect you.”

The young man blinked a few times, and turned to Un Hui.

He shook his head a few times, and walked forward.

“What are you doing?”

“Please step back.”

“What? Just watch. I told you that I could protect you, didn’t I?”

Tai Gonggong.

The man narrowed his eyes, and glared at the young man in front of him.

“Are you telling me that you’d ruin my fun?”

The young man made a troubled face, and opened his mouth.

“It would be fun to watch you have fun, but if we kill or lose that man, the General will be very mad.”

Tai Gonggong hesitated when he heard the word “General”.

Then, he looked at Un Hui with a disappointed face.

“Those kinds of guys are really rare..... and it’s going to be my first chance to fight guys like that without restrictions from the palace.....”

“You’ll have many chances soon, Gonggong. After all, are we not in the martial world right now?”

“Really?”

“Sure, there must be many others like that man over there.”

“.....Tch, fine. I’ll let go of it this time. I won’t let this pass next time, though.”

“Thank you, Tai Gonggong.”

“.....”

Un Hui listened in on the conversation without saying anything.

He let go of the fact that they treated him like a caught prey as well.

He didn't feel bad at all for some reason.

It was probably because that monster that resembled both man and woman was strong as he.

‘So the palace made its move.....’

The heir was right.

The Imperial Palace was far too dangerous.

It was a power that was far stronger than anyone else in the martial world.

‘If the army moves, everyone dies.’

That was the thought of everyone in the martial world.

At that moment, the young man slowly moved forward, and confronted Un Hui.

There was a distance of about 7 zhang (20 meters) between them.

The young man looked at Un Hui and smiled.

“You are not invited here, and should have not been here.”

“.....”

Un Hui looked at the young man with a calm gaze.

He was actually more concerned about the yinyang person (an individual who possesses the genitals of both man and woman) behind this young man.

‘Where did I feel this.....’

The feeling he got from this scholarly young man in front of him was definitely something he had felt before.

‘What is this?’

Un Hui looked at the young man with caution.

Then, the young man opened his mouth.

“My name is Ju Ho Yu. What would your name be?”

“.....Is there a need to tell you?”

Ju Ho Yu, the man dubbed with the title of being the greatest mathematician in the world, grinned.

“That’s quite disappointing. Well..... we’re probably going to spend much time together, so we’ll have plenty of time to learn it, I guess.”

“What makes you think we’ll have a lot of time together?”

“Well, I just feel like we’ll have a lot of time.....”

Once Ju Ho Yu took something out of his pocket, Un Hui widened his eyes.

Un Hui knew exactly what that man was once he saw the object from Ju Ho Yu.

“You’ll have to stay for the time being.”

Crack–

The wooden box the man took out broke, and jewels fell out from it.

At the same time, Un Hui began to move back as fast as possible.

But.....

‘Was I too late?’

Paa-!

Un Hui frowned as he disappeared.

Tai Gonggong whistled as he watched all this.

“Wow~ so that’s the formation thing that the General talked about so much?”

“Ah.... yes, it’s just a simple trick of mine, though.”

“It must cost a lot of money.”

“Yes. I wouldn’t even have been able to use this without the General’s help. I brought this along in case of an emergency, and the formation was still in experimental phases, but it still managed to work. That’s a relief.”

“An ability to capture a harmonious expert alive..... It’s no surprise the General entrusted you with all this work.”

Tai Gonggong looked at the space in front of him curiously as he said this.

“You shouldn’t get near. The formation’s still activating, so it’s quite dangerous.”

“I know. I heard from the General already.”

Although he acted fine on the outside, Tai Gonggong was actually extremely surprised.

‘This is a scary power.’

A harmonious expert was something that couldn’t be created even with hundreds of experts training for a lifetime.

Only a few people were ever able to break through the shell of human limits, and get into the harmonious realm.....

A power that was able to capture a harmonious expert so easily, like this?

A small laughter escaped out of Tai Gonggong’s lips when he thought this.

‘Well, I can kill him whenever I want, though.’

If they ever became enemies, he’d have to kill the man as soon as possible.

He would die if he didn't do that.

This young man actually happened to be an extremely frightening being.

As Tai Gonggong consoled himself like this, Ju Ho Yu frowned.

“Eh, could this be?!”

Craaack-!

The ground shook slightly.

It was enough to shake the entire building.

When Gal Mun Hyuk was about to move away from the formation,

Paa-!

The scene in front of them shattered to pieces, and a bright light came out from it.

And that light began to shoot towards Ju Ho Yu.

“I won't allow you to do that!”

Tai Gonggong took his sword, and swung it towards the light.

Bang-!

With a giant sound, something bounced backwards with speed.

That thing continued to move out of the building without stopping.

“Playing tricks? Get him!”

[Understood!]

Tens of shadows began to chase Un Hui at Tai Gonggong’s words.

Once he confirmed that his subordinates had all disappeared, he looked at Ju Ho Yu with a worried face.

“Hey, you alright?”

“.....Yes.”

When Ju Ho Yu nodded with a dumb face, Tai Gonggong opened his mouth with a frown.

“That bastard played tricks to escape from the start. But you don’t have to worry. My subordinates are first-rate hounds. That guy will get caught for sure.”

“Right.....”

Ju Ho Yu looked down at the ground with a crestfallen face.

The fact that he almost died just now didn’t matter.

What made him feel really depressed was the fact that his formation got broken so easily.

‘Just how?’

Although it was still in experimental phases, he was sure that the formation could even hold the General himself at bay.

But his belief got shattered mercilessly just now.

‘This isn’t real.’

This was a portable formation that he developed after much work.

Although making just one took him immense work and time along with money, he had thought that he would be able to get

through just about any situations with just this.

But that wasn't true.

‘Was I being too pretentious?’

As Ju Ho Yu looked at the ground dumbly, Tai Gonggong was thinking of something else.

‘That guy just now definitely wasn't one of the [fifteen guests](#).’

(TL Note: 7 kings, 5 emperors, and 3 sovereigns if you don't remember. Gongson Chun Gi is one of the Sovereigns)

He saw the martial arts techniques performed by the man clearly.

That man wasn't part of the 15 guests for sure.

This just made everything more interesting.

It showed him that there were many powerful people in the martial world.

When he realized this, a giant grin appeared on Tai Gonggong's face.

Chapter 91. Un Hui

Un Hui took off his mask, and threw up a mouthful of blood.

He calmly took a look at the white pieces of his intestines floating in the pool of blood behind him, and slowly sank down to the floor with the wall on his back.

‘I barely managed to shake them off.’

Un Hui closed his eyes as he steadied his breath.

He somehow managed to get out of the mountain building, but he couldn’t return to the church just yet.

He was concerned that the church might collide with the imperial palace.

Because of this, Un Hui did not run straight for the church. Instead, he ran around the property of the Alliance for quite a while, and lost his followers.

As he had to travel twice the distance he would’ve originally have had traveled, he had overcome death encounters several times already.

The experts from the palace were truly strong.

‘About three.....’

Un Hui had been quite confident in his speed, but when he thought of the three experts that chased him, he shook his head.

He was both tired and hurt, but thinking of the experts that did not let go even till the end made him feel a chill run down the spine.

‘Let’s wait till day like this.’

Un Hui quieted down slowly.

How much time had passed?

Even after a long while, there were no signs of anyone following him.

That was good.

If someone were to chase him all the way here, he might have not been able to take it anymore.

He could feel the sun rising as he slowly let out a sigh of relief.

Un Hui felt the cold air of dawn, and stood up.

‘It’s good that I knew about it beforehand.’

Once Un Hui got trapped in Ju Ho Yu’s formation, he immediately remembered Cho Ryu Hyang’s words.

He remembered the method to destroy the formation that Cho Ryu Hyang had taught him.

-Destroying a formation from the inside with pure power..... that’s actually very hard to do. But if I were to give you a single advice, it would be good to attack at the weakest point in time when the formation forms. The method of doing this is different for different types of formations, but most formations are at their weakest as they form. If you attack with all your power right as the formation forms, then perhaps you would be able to destroy the formation from the inside.

Un Hui trusted those words, and performed his greatest technique from inside the formation.

‘Radiance-killing phantom blade.’

It wasn’t completed yet, but this was the name of the martial arts technique Un Hui had created.

This allowed Un Hui to make use of all his power.

‘But the consequences of doing so is immense.....’

After he uses this technique, his body would be depleted of inner energy and strength for a while.

Un Hui stretched with his trembling body in order to relax his muscles.

His body that had been pushed to the utmost limit let out a painful scream.

Un Hui ignored it.

‘I need to go.’

He had made a promise.

He made a promise with his young master.

A promise to go back safely.

His master would be very worried for him right now.

That’s why he needed to leave as soon as possible.

Un Hui grit his teeth, and moved.

Shushushu-

His inner energy still wasn't able to flow properly, but Un Hui didn't stop to rest.

And as he finally arrived at his destination, he could sense someone moving inside.

“.....My lord.”

Bam-!

A person violently opened the door and ran outside.

It was Cho Ryu Hyang, Un Hui's little master.

“You're back!”

Un Hui smiled faintly.

Seeing the worry and relief on Cho Ryu Hyang's face made him feel relieved.

“Yes. Although I was late, Un Hui, your bodyguard, has returned.”

Cho Ryu Hyang didn't speak for a moment, and instead observed

Un Hui's body for a moment.

The man was covered in blood, and his mask was soaked with blood as well.

His pale face and trembling body showed Cho Ryu Hyang just how much pain Un Hui had gone through.



‘It’s my fault.’

Cho Ryu Hyang balled up his fists tightly.

He could have expected this easily beforehand.

No, he had expected this to happen beforehand.

He should have given Un Hui a way to get out safely.

He had warned Un Hui to be careful, but then Un Hui, a harmonious expert, came back nearly dead.

Cho Ryu Hyang could easily see how much danger the man was in.

‘If something had happened to him.....’

When he thought up to that point, Cho Ryu Hyang shook his head.

He took off his glasses, and rubbed the bridge of his nose.

His eyes were getting read.

He had suddenly thought of his teacher, Jo Gi Chun.

‘I won’t let something like that happen ever again.’

Cho Ryu Hyang slowly walked up to Un Hui, put his hands on the man’s shoulders, and spoke with a bit of a stutter.

“Thank..... Thank you for coming back safely.”

“.....”

Un Hui somehow managed to kneel with his tired body, and opened his mouth.

“The..... the Imperial Palace became involved.”

Cho Ryu Hyang quickly stood up Un Hui, and supported his body.

“I’ll listen to your report later. First, your treatment.....”

Un Hui shook his head, and opened his mouth.

“Your predictions were correct. There was someone behind Gal Mun Hyuk..... the Imperial Palace. And there was a strong expert with them as well.”

“As expected.....”

Cho Ryu Hyang nodded.

He had expected this already.

But an expert that could reduce Un Hui to such a state.....

He wasn't able to see just how strong a person like that could be.

Then, Un Hui steadied his breath a bit, then kept talking.

“And there..... there was a person who could use formations like you.”

“.....!”

“He was about thirty. He was in scholarly clothes, and didn't seem to have learned any martial arts.”

Cho Ryu Hyang made a face of strong disbelief.

“A person who used formations like me?”

“Yes.”

“That's impossible.”

It was impossible.

The only reason Cho Ryu Hyang could use formations like he did was because he used them using a completely different method compared to other formation experts.

Unless one had Godly Eyes like he did, it was impossible for a normal formation expert to use formations like him.

Un Hui frowned in pain for a moment, then opened his mouth again.

“Once that man threw a small box at me, I became trapped. If it wasn’t for your advice, I would’ve been captured.”

“.....He threw a box, and then you got captured?”

“Yes.”

Cho Ryu Hyang became dazed at that moment.

He had instantly understood what had happened.

Cho Ryu Hyang stood dumbly for a moment as he reenacted what had happened to Un Hui in his brain, then came to his senses.

’No way.’

A formation strong enough to contain Un Hui.

Making such a formation by throwing a box would mean that his new opponent had understood the laws of the world using math.

At that instant, Cho Ryu Hyang became frightened.

He handed over Un Hui to No Jin Nyung who was hurrying over to where he was, and stood dumbly.

“I’ll take him to the doctor.”

“Yes.....”

Once No Jin Nyung disappeared, Cho Ryu Hyang began to calculate the possibility of there being a man who could understand the world like he did.

Once Cho Ryu Hyang reached a conclusion, he became calm once more.

‘It’s not completely impossible.’

But one had to contribute immense amounts of time studying mathematics in order to achieve that.

One had to expend almost as much time as Zhuge Liang did in studying math.

It was possible that such a person existed in the world.

‘I was to meet him.’

What would happen if they were to meet?

If they met as enemies, Cho Ryu Hyang would perhaps be meeting the strongest enemy he had ever met.

While he was thinking that, something came over and hit his legs.

When he looked down, he saw Maksu.

Cho Ryu Hyang looked at the sickly rabbit, and opened his mouth.

“How are you here?”

[.....Is that really something you should say after handing me over to that damn girl?]

“So you ran away.”

Cho Ryu Hyang looked at the rabbit with uncaring eyes, then moved away.

He had treated Un Hui badly due to coming into contact with such a shocking piece of information.

He needed to visit the doctor to check up on him.

When Cho Ryu Hyang moved away like such, Maksu trembled and shouted angrily.

[You damned child! Are you even aware of who you are looking down on?]

At the moment, an oppressive aura came out of the rabbit.

But Cho Ryu Hyang was not fazed one bit.

He wasn't scared either.

“I don't really care about who you are, but I can say that I know one thing about you.”

Cho Ryu Hyang readjusted the glasses on his face, and spoke slowly.

“You hold promises extremely lightly.”

[.....!]

“Why do you look at me like that? Am I wrong?”

Maksu slowly repressed his aura, and grit his teeth.

If he could turn back time, he would just destroy the deal he had made with that boy.

But he knew very well that he couldn't.

[.....I lost control. I apologize.]

Cho Ryu Hyang accepted the rabbit's apology, then turned around with a smirk.

Beings like Maksu were strangely obsessive about promises, as he had learned from Tian Nu, the Imugi.

Unlike humans, they were beings that could be trusted.

[I need to ask you something.]

The rabbit said this as he followed Cho Ryu Hyang from behind.

“Go ahead.”

Cho Ryu Hyang answered with an uninterested tone.

Maksu's eyes trembled from anger at Cho Ryu Hyang's attitude, but he could only endure.

He made a promise, didn't he?

That he'd act like a normal rabbit.....

He wanted to die every time he thought of the promise.

[What did you do with the Godly Herb that I was growing? Did you eat it?]

“Godly Herb?”

[Yeah. It has red leaves..... and its petals are green..... it looks like this.]

Maksu somehow used his hands and legs to describe what the flower looked like while running.

“Are you talking about the Nine Lands Medicinal Flower?”

[I believe that was what the foolish humans were calling it.]

The rabbit spoke with a majestic voice.

It just made Cho Ryu Hyang laugh.

Cho Ryu Hyang barely suppressed his laughter, and spoke.

“If I ate it?”

[.....Others would normally die, but you.....]

Maksu thought a bit, then frowned.

He then spoke dejectedly.

[Perhaps you’d survive. That’s why I’m asking. Did you just stuff the thing into your mouth? Eh? You greedy pig.]

“No, I didn’t eat it. It’s still there.”

Maksu’s ears stood up in excitement.

[Really? You didn’t eat it?]

“Yeah.”

[Humans lie easily. Are you telling me to believe such a thing?]

“.....You don’t have to.”

When Cho Ryu Hyang made an annoyed face, Maksu spoke as he shook his tiny little arms.

[No, no, I believe you. You are different from the others.]

As Maksu said this, he looked at Cho Ryu Hyang with a curious gaze.

[But why didn't you eat it? Don't humans like you go crazy over things like that?]

“Just..... It seemed to be alive, so I didn't want to hurt it.”

When Cho Ryu Hyang spoke honestly like this, Maksu became dazed.

Maksu tilted his head in curiosity, and spoke.

[Is that..... really it?]

“Yeah.”

[Are you telling me to believe such a thing?]

“.....You don't have to.”

Cho Ryu Hyang made an annoyed face, then turned away.

“If you have nothing else to say, then go. I’m busy.”

He was extremely worried about Un Hui.

When Cho Ryu Hyang left for the doctor, Maksu stood in his spot alone and spoke.

[I..... I do not believe there are humans that aren’t greedy.]

But Maksu knew.

He knew that Cho Ryu Hyang did not eat the Nine Lands Medicinal Flower.

He knew that the boy did not take the Flower.

He just didn’t want to accept it.

[I had thought that all humans were dumb and idiotic.....]

Perhaps one of them wasn’t an idiot. That made Maksu feel very complicated.

Chapter 92. Maksu's Sorrow

Un Hui's condition was worse than everyone had thought.

He had used too much inner energy whilst he was severely injured.

Cho Ryu Hyang's face turned complicated as he watched Un Hui.

“What will we do about Gal Mun Hyuk? Are we just going to leave him be?”

Cho Ryu Hyang thought a moment when he received those questions from Sunwu Cho Rin; then, he opened his mouth.

“It would be best to leave him be for now.”

Sunwu Cho Rin made an annoyed face as she opened her mouth.

“Is it because of the experts at the palace?”

At the moment, not even Sunwu Cho Rin knew how many experts the Imperial Palace had.

But she didn't believe that they would lose in terms of sheer power.

‘At least once.....’

Sunwu Cho Rin bit her lips.

As long as the church sold salt in Sichuan, the church and the Imperial Palace were definitely going to collide at least once.

That’s why she thought that there was a need to crush them as soon as possible.

‘I never liked that idiot anyway.’

If Sunwu Cho Rin were to name one reason why Gal Mun Hyuk should die, it would be because ‘he was annoying’.

The man actually dared to go against the church?

That alone made him deserve to die a thousand times over.

Sunwu Cho Rin immediately discarded the idea; however, when Cho Ryu Hyang continued.

“I’m not worried about the Imperial Palace. What I’m really worried about is the Black Moon Guild.”

Black Moon Guild?

How were they related to all this?

Cho Ryu Hyang continued to explain to the confused Sunwu Cho Rin.

“Gal Mun Hyuk has ties with the Black Moon Guild. If the Black Moon Guild knows that Gal Mun Hyuk was making dealings with the Imperial Palace, they won’t stay quiet. They have their pride after all. It’s not worth going after him. It’s inefficient.”

“.....”

Sunwu Cho Rin looked at Cho Ryu Hyang strangely.

Cho Ryu Hyang wasn’t shaken at all by Un Hui’s injuries, and he was still making logical decisions at this time.

The kid really was someone who knew how to think.

She was beginning to see Cho Ryu Hyang in a new light, but on the other hand, her desire to kill him intensified even more.

‘I definitely can’t let him get together with Ahri.’

As Sunwu Cho Rin was having these thoughts, Cho Ryu Hyang opened his mouth.

“Leak the information about Gal Mun Hyuk to the guild. Don’t let them know we leaked the information, though.”

“Understood.”

Doing just that would be extremely easy for the church.

After giving out orders, Cho Ryu Hyang looked down at Un Hui with a worried face.

Sunwu Cho Rin’s thoughts began to stray as she looked at Cho Ryu Hyang’s face from the side.

There also was a white rabbit that Gongson Ahri began to bring to her bed every night.

Because of the fact that this rabbit, which had the strange name of Maksu, belonged to Cho Ryu Hyang, Sunwu Cho Rin felt annoyed whenever she saw it.

That was why she always bothered the rabbit when she got the chance.

‘Come to think of it, that rabbit was a little bit strange.....’

Just what about it was strange?

Sunwu Cho Rin recalled the time when she threw the rabbit by its feet when Gongson Ahri wasn't watching.

It almost felt like the rabbit was looking at her in a certain way.

‘I must’ve been imagining things.....’

Was it sorrow and pain?

No, those eyes seemed to reflect a hint of grief.

They were eyes that seemed far too complicated to belong to a simple animal.

After that point, Sunwu Cho Rin decided not to bother the rabbit anymore.

It made her feel uncomfortable.

But watching Gongson Ahri happily talk about the rabbit to Cho Ryu Hyang made her stomach flip.

She immediately forgot about the rabbit's sorrowful eyes altogether, and threw the thing by its ears in rage.

How could she describe the eyes of the rabbits at that point.....

It greatly resembled those of an old man's at that time.

‘I must be going crazy.’

Anyway, both the rabbit and its owner were very annoying.

The two resembled each other.

As Sunwu Cho Rin complained to herself, the rabbit teleported away to the place he had been sealed at.

‘Damn women.....’

Maksu rubbed his ears and ground his teeth. His ears still hurt.

Whether it was the gold-haired girl or the black-haired one, they were both equally annoying.

‘Are you not afraid of my revenge.....’

Maksu swore that he would take revenge as his body trembled in rage, but he knew that doing that would be extremely hard.

Unless that strange kid called Cho Ryu Hyang didn't die, he couldn't do anything.

Maksu was about to walk to the place where he had been sealed

with depressed emotions, but then something entered his senses.

“Krrr.....”

The two shining eyes in the darkness.

The 王 (wang: king) character that was engraved on the forehead.

It was a tiger that was known to be the Mountain King.

The aura that was being emitted from its giant body was truly overbearing.

But Maksu’s eyes didn’t have a tint of fear in them.

Instead, his face actually held a smirk.

[Leave, cat. Don’t be tempted by my appearance, and instead go find some other guy to eat.]

“Krrrr.....”

The tiger ignored Maksu’s warning, and took a step forward.

Maksu’s eyes were filled with rage in that instant.

But he managed to control himself a bit and calmly opened his mouth.

[This is my last warning. I'm busy so leave.]

“Kuaaa!”

The tiger completely ignored Maksu and jumped towards the rabbit with its paws wide open.

It was an attack that obliterated countless victims in the past, but this only managed to annoy Maksu even further.

[Shit! These bastards.....]

This time, Maksu did not control himself.

No, there was no need so.

He jumped up and performed a spinning kick on the tiger.

It struck the tiger's chin, and made the tiger fly off into the distance.

“Kuoooo!”

Smash-!

When the tiger hit the ground, it made a heavy noise.

But Maksu wasn't satisfied with just this.

[You're dead.]

Maksu quickly ran to the tiger, and smashed his paw into the abdomen of the tiger.

Crack-!

“Kang!”

The tiger let out a painful shout in this strange and peculiar situation, but Maksu just kept on kicking and punching the thing.

Crack-! Wham-!

Maksu beat up the tiger to the verge of death, then he crouched in front of the sared tiger and opened his mouth.

[How is it? Can you see who is the stronger one now?]

“Hnn.....”

When the tiger moaned in pain, Maksu spoke.

[I'm going to get shit on if I kill a weakling like you, so I'll let you go for now. Leave.]

“Hnng.....”

When the tiger left with its trembling body, Maksu shook his head and sighed.

Since when did he start doing shameful deeds like this?

The fact that he actually got himself involved with such a thing made him feel extremely humiliated.

Humiliation bubbled up in his body.

Maksu stood dumbly at his spot for a moment, then shook his head, and opened his mouth.

[I should go get that child.]

Maksu looked around a bit, and became a bit confused.

[It should be here...?]

He couldn't find anything when he looked around, though.

Did someone take it?

[No way.]

The Godly Herb wasn't something people could easily get their hands on.

It only begged for its life because Cho Ryu Hyang and Un Hui were that strong. If a normal person were to approach it, its roots would wrap around the person and turn him/her to food.

After looking around for a moment, Maksu realized something.

[Could it be?]

Something was strange.

He stretched out his senses, and scanned the area once more. When he did so, his jaw dropped.

[Magic? No, a formation? Wait, what? It's both? What the hell?]

Maksu began to mumble to himself like a buddhist monk uttering prayers.

[Come to think of it, that strange old man with the weird fan did

a similar thing. So that kid was imitating that old man's works.]

As Maksu did not realize that all this was created with mathematics, he simply became even more confused about Cho Ryu Hyang.

[Is the kid the old man's disciple or something.....]

When he thought of the old man, he became annoyed again.

But he quickly came out of his imagination and began to look around once more.

There had to be the "core" of the formation nearby.

He managed to find it rather quickly.

[.....He used this rock as the core?]

Maksu's face turned strange.

Normally, one would make a formation with precious gems, or something that was as abnormal as a gem.

But using a rock as a core? That was the first, even for Maksu.

Crack-

When Maksu lightly exerted pressure into the rock, it turned to dust.

At the same time.

Whoosh-

The air rushed out, and the space in front of Maksu exploded.

There, Maksu was able to see what he had been searching for.

“Have you waited long, Heng’e (嫦娥)?”

Tremble-

Heng’e.

It was the name of the beauty who was said to live in the palace of the moon.

Maksu had given the flower this name, and had been taking care of it for long.

The Nine Lands Medicinal Flower trembled one of its leaves slightly.

Maksu grabbed onto that leaf, and spoke.

[I have come for you, for I knew you were still alive. It looks like I came at the right time.]

Maksu spoke tiredly as he stroked the body of the flower.

[Now, I must follow the arrogant kid on his journey. That would be the best way to recover my strength. But it worries me to just leave you here.]

The Nine Lands Medicinal Flower stretched out its other leaf and stroked Maksu's cheeks.

It seemed to be telling him that it was alright, and that he shouldn't be worried about it.

Maksu, who had been staying silent for a while, spoke.

[Will you follow me?]

The Nine Lands Medicinal Flower stopped moving.

It was thinking.

Maksu looked at the flower with patience.

After a moment, when the flower made a positive movement, Maksu opened his mouth with a gleeful face.

[Thank you for trusting me.]

Maksu carefully put his feet at the ground where the roots of the flower were located.

He then asked a question.

[You will never be able to go back. Are you fine with this?]

The flower once again made a positive movement.

Maksu smiled as he saw this.

[You will accompany me from now on.]



When he exerted force, the ground shook like water.

Maksu then breathed in a large amount of air.

He was trying to exert as much godly power as he could.

[Huaaa!]

Dududu-!

The giant roots of the flower were exposed and was floating in midair.

Maksu opened his mouth.

[Put your roots down into where my neidan is.]

The roots of the flower flew towards the abdomen of Maksu.

Vuun-

It seemed that Maksu's body was going to get pierced by the roots, but that was not the case.

The giant roots of the flower got sucked into Maksu's abdomen.

Soon, Maksu looked down at his abdomen, and smiled.

Most of the flower, save for a single, tiny leaf, had set into the body of Maksu.

Maksu began to move slowly.

[Nnnn.....]

His body was extremely tired from using so much energy, but he had to walk.

He would recover fast as long as he was next to Cho Ryu Hyang.

Although he didn't like the kid, there was no choice.

[Just wait until I recover completely.....]

There would be no need to be so concerned with the pearl that the kid had when that happened.

He'd go up to heaven, then perform his revenge.

He tried to take a step, and swore without even realizing it.

[Shit! Damn!]

He couldn't even teleport because he had used too much power.

He'd have to walk the whole distance.

Walking to the branch of the Heavenly Demon Church by feet made Maksu feel very, very sorrowful.

He realized something then.

[Come to think of it.....]

Didn't he have some ability other than his strength?

How did he forget about it?

Maksu's sorrowful gaze immediately began to turn evil.

Note:

Pic is a present from the author's friend who drew this for him on the author's birthday.



Chapter 93. Request

The old man with the cold face was the previous master of the Black Moon Guild and the member of the Three Sovereigns, the Night Emperor Neng Mu Gi.

He, who had been quietly meditating in his home at the Qilian Mountains, slowly opened his eyes.

He then opened the door and went outside.

The place where Neng Mu Gi resided was at the very peak of the Qilian Mountains, the Tuanjie (團結) peak.

His house was built on its dangerously steep cliffs.

Once he stepped outside his house, the first thing he could see were the clouds that gathered down the floor.

Neng Mu Gi's gaze pierced through the sea of clouds and focused on a single spot.

When he did so, he could see.

Far away from him, someone was beginning to climb the mountain.

It was a giant man wearing a golden robe, walking confidently

upwards.

Neng Mu Gi's eyes narrowed as he saw this from the cliffs.

‘It's an expert.’

Who is it?

He had never seen such a person before.

As Neng Mu Gi tried to see through the identity of the man, the gold-robed man looked up.

The man looked up and smiled faintly.

That smile contained the confidence and leisure of a conqueror.

When Neng Mu Gi looked down at the man with a calm face, he was able to hear the man's voice in his head.

[I apologize for coming without notifying you in advance, but we are in a troublesome situation here so please understand.]

“.....”

[My surname would be Chuk, and I work for the palace. I walk a different path from you, so you do not have to be so wary of me.]

Neng Mu Gi frowned when he heard the man's name.

He realized who the man was.

‘General Chuk Gye Gwang.’

The expert of the Imperial Palace.

He was a harmonious expert that was still hidden to the world.

And surprisingly enough, this Chuk Gye Gwang happened to be on the same level as he, one of the Three Sovereigns.

[Is it possible for us to talk for a moment?]

What shall he do?

The man was an unexpected guest.

Even so, the man's identity alone made Neng Mu Gi think that the man's actions were not rude at all.

After thinking for a moment, Neng Mu Gi nodded.

He was curious as to why Chuk Gye Gwang came all the way

here.

[Well then, please excuse me.]

Chuk Gye Gwang's body began to speed up.

His giant body turned faint for a second, then it got enveloped in golden light and began to move with extreme speed.

Shuaa-

The man, who was climbing the mountain with extreme speed, saw the cliff in front of him, but didn't slow down.

Instead, he began to speed up.

And.....

Crack-

He stepped on one of the stones that poked out of the cliff with his feet, and like a golden bird, flew straight upwards to the top.

He did this about three or four times.

In an instant, Chuk Gye Gwang had reached the top.

Neng Mu Gi went into his home and brought teacups and a teapot.

He put them on his table.

After he breathed about two times, something came up from the cliffs.

It was something that was filled with golden light.

That something fell to the ground, and left a deep, clear footprint.

Kuuum-!

A loud, heavy sound rang out.

At the same time, Chuk Gye Gwang had appeared on the top of the cliff, wreathed in a golden light.

He dispersed his energy easily by moving his arms around a bit and smiled.

“It is nice to meet you. My name would be Chuk Gye Gwang. Are you Neng Mu Gi, the Night Emperor?”

Neng Mu Gi nodded.

Then, he threw the teacup filled with tea towards Chuk Gye Gwang.

Shuii-! Tuk-

Chuk Gye Gwang received the teacup lightly and smiled.

“What a surprise. I didn’t expect the Night Emperor himself to treat me a tea.”

“I didn’t know that a guest would come. The tea might not taste that great.”

“Does taste matter? The heart is what matters the most, and I’m too dumb to even recognize what is good tea and what is bad tea, anyway.”

Neng Mu Gi did not say anything, and simply looked straight at Chuk Gye Gwang.

Chuk Gye Gwang quietly looked at Neng Mu Gi as well, then spoke as he took the teacup to his mouth.

“In any case, thank you for treating me as a guest. I was afraid that you might try to turn me away.”

“Your identity is too great for me to simply ignore you.”

“A wise decision.”

Gulp-

Chuk Gye Gwang drank the contents of the teacup in one fell swoop and sat down on the opposite side of the table from Neng Mu Gi.

He glared at Neng Mu Gi.

Neng Mu Gi did not look away, and opened his mouth.

“What do you want?”

Chuk Gye Gwang licked his lips in disappointment when he found that Neng Mu Gi wasn't fazed one bit by his glare. He opened his mouth.

“I have a request.”

“Request?”

“Yes, a request.”

Neng Mu Gi smiled.

It was a mocking smile.

“You came to the wrong place.”

“.....You didn’t even hear me out.”

“I already know what you’re trying to ask me to do.”

Neng Mu Gi brought the teacup to his mouth, and looked straight at Chuk Gye Gwang.

“Gongson Chun Gi isn’t someone you can assassinate in the first place.”

“.....”

Chuk Gye Gwang closed his mouth.

That was exactly what he was about to talk about.

An awkward silence emerged between the two.

But to Neng Mu Gi, this silence was as natural as the air itself.

Within that silence, Neng Mu Gi quietly put down his teacup and

opened his mouth.

“There is one good thing that comes out of getting old, I guess.”

“What are you talking about.”

Neng Mu Gi didn't respond immediately and quietly looked at Chuk Gye Gwang.

Once Chuk Gye Gwang's burning eyes and Neng Mu Gi's cold eyes met midair, Chuk Gye Gwang's eyebrows twitched.

'This man.....'

Chuk Gye Gwang felt the leisure and infiniteness from the eyes of Neng Mu Gi.

As Chuk Gye Gwang began to frown from those eyes, Neng Mu Gi began to talk slowly.

“I realize that you have a different motive other than to request me to do something.”

“.....”

“But I have already retreated from the martial world. Do not try to make me move. I do not have neither the desire nor the power

to help you.”

Chuk Gye Gwang’s eyes shone at that moment.

He couldn’t give up.

“I need your help desperately. Although you have retreated, your fame still pierces through the heavens.”

“If it has anything to do with Gongson Chun Gi, I cannot help you.”

“It would be hard with just you alone, but how about five?”

Five?

Neng Mu Gi paused at the number ‘five’.

He instantly realized who these people were.

Chuk Gye Gwang proceeded to confirm his suspicions.

“The former chief of the Alliance, Baek Mu Ryang. The master of the Nanman Beast Gate, Gu Ma Byuk. The palace lord of the North Sea Ice Palace, Dam Chun Hoo. You, and I. Even Gongson Chun Gi will be ground to dust if us five attack, don’t you think?”

“.....”

This truly was a frighteningly large plan.

Gongson Chun Gi wasn't someone that couldn't be overpowered with numbers.

A small number of elites were needed to face him.

Elites that could block his attacks and kill him.

If the five that Chuk Gye Gwang spoke of were to gather, Gongson Chun Gi would just be a small obstacle.

When Neng Mu Gi thought that much, he slowly opened his mouth.

“Again, I refuse.”

“Why?”

When Chuk Gye Gwang asked this with a frown, Neng Mu Gi spoke.

“Like I said before, I have already left the martial world. I do not have the desire to interfere with anything that happens there.”

“.....Really?”

Neng Mu Gi nodded.

He then closed his eyes.

Neng Mu Gi was clearly chasing out his own guest.

Chuk Gye Gwang looked at Neng Mu Gi with a complicated gaze then stood up.

He turned around and spoke.

“I’ll trust that you were speaking the truth just now.”

“.....”

“If you happen to come out into the martial world in the future, I will not treat you as kindly as before.”

It was a clear threat.

Neng Mu Gi didn’t say anything.

Chuck Gye Gwang spoke again with his back to Neng Mu Gi.

“Although there have been some changes to the initial plan, Gongson Chun Gi will still die.”

“.....”

“Then, I shall leave.”

Chuk Gye Gwang walked forward and jumped off the cliff.

His body was once again enveloped with a golden light and fell down with great speed.

Right before his body hit the ground, he stopped.

This wasn't some low-class technique he showed Neng Mu Gi earlier.

He had been hiding his strength on purpose.

As Chuk Gye Gwang slowly descended down onto the ground, Neng Mu Gi spoke.

“I do not think that even if five experts from five different forces were to work together, Gongson Chun Gi could be killed that easily.”

Neng Mu Gi thought of Chuk Gye Gwang and smiled faintly.

“That arrogant man of the Heavenly Demon Church has reached the peak of power already. No matter what you do, it would be impossible for you to kill him unless you know of his weakness.”

Neng Mu Gi knew of the weakness Gongson Chun Gi possessed very well.

He saw the battle between Gongson Chun Gi and Baek Mu Ryang and noticed it.

‘Shura Environment.....’

That overbearing martial arts technique had a frightening side effect.

The user would become mad from all the blood once it is used.

The Shura Environment was an evil technique.

In order to kill Gongson Chun Gi, one would have to make him exhausted after using the Shura Environment.

But Neng Mu Gi really didn’t want to tell anyone that.

‘I repaid you for the meal you got me last time.’

Neng Mu Gi thought of Gongson Chun Gi's face from the past and smiled.

He thought that the price of the meal was far too large.

Cho Ryu Hyang checked up on Un Hui in the morning, and went straight to work.

The first thing he had to do was to deal with the problem that occurred due to Gal Mun Hyuk.

'This is annoying.'

He needed a new seller.

Salt wasn't something one couldn't sell easily.

As the country controlled almost all the salt, people who weren't licensed couldn't even sell it, and even if they could, they could only sell a small amount.

Therefor, the best way to sell salt was to use other sellers as a proxy, or to get a license, but none of these methods were possible.

Many of these sellers were related to Gal Mun Hyuk in one way or the other, so it was going to be extremely hard to do anything

that had to do with them.

Getting a new license took about half a year. This took far too much time.

He needed to either make a new seller, or make connections with one that wasn't related to Gal Mun Hyuk.

This was the assignment Cho Ryu Hyang had been given, and it was something he had to solve as the leader of this place.

After thinking a bit, Cho Ryu Hyang moved to the underground storage.

Normally, underground areas were extremely humid, but this was not the case for this one.

It was far too dry.

There were torches lined up to no end, and the storage was extremely large.

This place had enough security to rival the security at the actual church itself.

Just what was here?

Cho Ryu Hyang was able to go down to the storage easily thanks to his position in the church.

It almost seemed that he knew exactly what was under the place.

Behind him was No Jin Nyung, and the Mara's Heavenly Wind Division.

They were extremely alert as they had to fill the position that Un Hui had been taking as well.

'This would be the best time for the enemy to make a move.'

Cho Ryu Hyang knew this well.

But he was too busy to just stay holed up in a safe place.

Clack clack-

The underground storage had, in its centre, not gold, but white rocks. Cho Ryu Hyang stared at this with a concerned face.

He took his finger to one of the rocks, scraped off the powder from it, and licked it.

He could then feel the saltiness from the powder.

'Stone salt.....'

This was it.

This was the salt that the church had discovered.

This was not the salt that came from the sea.

It was the kind that could be occasionally found in the mountains.

The Heavenly Demon Church managed to find a giant salt mine in the mountains.

'About a hundred year's worth.....'

It was worth a huge amount of money.

It wasn't low-quality salt, either.

Normal stone salt was far inferior to the salt from the common salt.

But the salt the church discovered was different.

The degree of salinity in one of these rocks were enough to paralyze the tongue.

Its taste and quality outranked the normal salt by quite a bit.

'The problem is, there's no place where we can sell it.....'

So what if it was tasty?

If there was no place to sell it, it was the same as any other rock.

Bang-! Bang-!

Cho Ryu Hyang punched lightly at these stones and growned.

Normal salt sellers were too exposed.

He needed to find a seller that was hidden well.

As Cho Ryu Hyang thought this,

No Jin Nyung tried having a taste of the salt as well.

"Ugh..... ptui! This is way too salty!"

Cho Ryu Hyang smiled lightly when he saw No Jin Nyung frown from the salt.

Unlike the Mara's Heavenly Wind Division, No Jin Nyung seemed extremely loose and leisurely.

‘Leisure.....’

Cho Ryu Hyang made a dazed face for a moment.

Was he thinking too hard?

Perhaps the answer was easier than he had thought?

When he thought this, something came into his mind like lightning.

Perhaps it was a coincidence, or a stroke of genius. Cho Ryu Hyang had managed to think of a plan to solve all his problems.

Cho Ryu Hyang grasped the hands of No Jin Nyung and spoke.

“I found it!”

“What?”

“It's all thanks to you. Thank you.”

No Jin Nyung looked at Cho Ryu Hyang with a confused face.

Cho Ryu Hyang smiled like a child in response.

Although Cho Ryu Hyang himself did not realize it, this was the first childish smile he had shown in a while.

Cho Ryu Hyang seemed to have forgotten how to smile brightly at some point in the past.

But after he arrived at Sichuan, he seemed to be changing slowly.



Chapter 94. Cho Ryu Hyang's Plan

In the nation, there was a law known as the salt law.

If one were to explain it simply, it was a law that allowed the nation to administrate and control the salt, and this law was created in the beginning of the Tang Dynasty.

The salt law, when it first began, allowed the government to take in a huge amount of money in taxes even more than what the officials initially expected. With this money, the nation was able to create a huge army.

A huge army would become the power of the Imperial Palace. The greater the power, the more stable the position of the government would be.

This was why the Imperial Palace was being so wary of salt smuggling.

A strange rumor began to float around the salt merchants of Sichuan.

At first, this was a small rumor that just roamed from mouth to mouth of a few salesmen, but the rumor soon grew to something that choked at the necks of all the merchants.

Bang-!

A firm hand struck the table below it.

The owner of that hand was currently trembling from extreme rage.

“Are you kidding me? How can our profits just halved in ten days?”

The losses that they sustained from all this was actually much bigger than what it sounded.

Gal Mun Hyuk glared viciously at the rat-like man with red eyes.

“But it’s true. The merchants that bought salt from us previously simply refuse to buy anything from us.”

“Do you still not know why they’re doing this?”

“None of them would agree to meet us at all. They’re being extremely cautious as well, so it’s pretty hard to use brute force.....”

Gal Mun Hyuk ground his teeth.

“There must be something going on.”

“Yes, but there’s no way to figure out what’s happening.”

“You bastard! You should’ve found out one way or the other. At this pace we all are just going to starve to death.”

“But these merchants have been in this business for a long time, and they have quite a lot of influences on their own. It would be extremely difficult to capture even one merchant.”

“Just do it. You can use how many people you want, so you just go and capture one.”

“Understood.”

“You know what would happen if you fail, right?”

“.....I’ll keep that in mind.”

“You have to succeed unless you want to be cured in salt.”

Jung Ok nodded countless times at the words of Gal Mun Hyuk and ran out.

Gal Mun Hyuk looked at this scene quietly, then he sat down on his chair and muttered to himself.

“It’s clear that the Heavenly Demon Church has made a move.....”

This wasn’t just a suspicion. He was almost certain that this was the case.

The market wouldn’t change like this unless someone that big moved.

Gal Mun Hyuk owned the biggest salt-selling organization in Sichuan.

There was no way he would not know of what was going since he owned up to 30% of all the salt in Sichuan.

’So how?’

The market does not change that easily.

Unless something more charming than the norm appears, the market would stay the same.

“They must’ve done something ingenious.....”

He just couldn’t figure out what they did, though.

However he had to know.

Having big merchants come to him to buy salt was extremely important.

Even if selling salt in the black market was profitable, there was a clear limit on how much they could earn.

If the merchants didn't buy salt from him anymore, then they wouldn't be able to earn anything.

No, they'd actually have to sell everything they had to just survive.

'I can't allow that to happen.'

Just how did he get all the way here?

The Imperial Palace came to kill him for smuggling salt at first.

But he bribed his way out of it, and he somehow managed to get to where he was now.

He truly turned a dangerous encounter into a fortuitous event.

He could become filthy rich if he just worked a little more. It would be troublesome if everything crumbled now.

“Want some help? Scholar Ju told me to help you as much as needed, so it’s fine.”

Tai Gonggong appeared like a shadow behind Gal Mun Hyuk.

Gal Mun Hyuk became extremely conflicted when he saw the man.

It would be easy for the task to be finished if he were to employ the power of a harmonious expert.

However this was a dual-edged blade.

It would show that he wasn’t even capable of solving this small problem on his own.

“It’s just a task of kidnapping a merchant. Us alone is enough.”

“Really? I was looking forward to taking a little walk. How disappointing.”

When Tai Gonggong licked his feminine red lips in boredom, Gal Mun Hyuk looked down whilst concealing his feeling of disgust.

“Jobs as dirty as this isn’t really fitting for someone like you. It’s better to leave such things to us.”

Tai Gonggong smiled strangely.

“Hoh? Really? Anyway, just contact me if you need help. I haven’t been getting any excitement at all after that bastard. I can’t help but get bored, you know?”

“Understood.”

When Tai Gonggong disappeared into the shadows, Gal Mun Hyuk sighed to himself.

They call it protection, but this was no different from them monitoring him.

The fact that he was being monitored 24/7 stressed Gal Mun Hyuk quite a bit.

But it couldn’t be helped.

If the Black Moon Guild or the Heavenly Demon Church moved, he would disappear in an instant.

’This is bad.’

That man who appeared before in the mountains was definitely from the Heavenly Demon Church.

Just thinking about that time made Gal Mun Hyuk feel pissed.

That kid who was being called the heir of the church.

He had underestimated the kid far too much.

He thought that he fooled the kid... but to think he would become tailed.. he didn't expect it at all.

‘I’m not going to die so easily, though.’

As long as the Imperial Palace protected him, he was safe.

Gal Mun Hyuk consoled his unstable self like so.

“They deployed us to catch a little merchant like that? Aren’t they overdoing things a bit? What do you think, Chu Ilsan?”

The one known as Chu Ilsan, who had a nickname of Hundred Victories Saber (百勝刀) in the martial world, looked at the fat man who called him calmly.

“Well, they must just be asking me to actually start doing something worth my money. You, Elder He (He 亥: Pig), must’ve gotten too used to playing around as well. You became too shameless.”

Elder He, the one who was called Ten Thousand Palms Pig (萬手亥), scratched the back of his head as he spoke.

“Did I? Well, it is true that I don’t really like this job though.”

“What a surprise. The great pig got scared of the job before even starting? Just think of this job as repaying the employer for all the money he gave us.”

At this point, a skinny old man joined in on the conversation.

“Keke, Chu Ilsan, you kid. It’s not a bad thing to steal from a salt merchant. They have a lot of money anyway, you know? We’re just sharing a little, so why are you so discomforted by all this?”

Chu Ilsan looked at the skinny old man in disgust.

“So the Ancient Tree Sage has the mind of a bandit. I didn’t know that.”

“Kekeke, I was a bandit from the start, so I don’t really feel insulted.”

Chu Ilsan smiled.

“I wasn’t trying to insult you. There’s no point in fighting with you anyway.”

“Kekeke, arrogant child.”

“If I’m an arrogant child, wouldn’t you be a sensible old man?”

When Chu Ilsan said this, the old man called Ancient Tree Sage cracked a few of his bones while he smiled creepily.

Crack-

“Kukekeke, child, is your sword skills as good as your dirty talk?”

“It’s not bad.”

“Do you have the courage to show it to me?”

The ten peak experts that gathered here were all the subordinates of Gal Mun Hyuk.

They were all here for the same job, but since they had barely ever met each other, they did not synergize well at all.

At the moment when the two seemed to collide,

Clap-!

Someone walked out from the back and spoke.

“Now, now. Let’s stop getting all worked up, and we better start getting ready. Jin Tae Ho began to make his move.”

Jin Tae Ho.

This was the name of their target today.

Gal Mun Hyuk’s right hand, Jung Ok, nervously observed the group of experts.

Thankfully, it seemed that they would no longer get into a conflict.

Chu Ilsan decided to give in first.

Then, the peak experts who were looking forward to seeing them fight stood up with a disappointed face.

They then began moving towards the areas they were in charge of.

Jung Ok quickly opened his mouth.

“Lord Gal Mun Hyuk has assigned all of you a special mission due to the trust he has in all your skills.”

“A special mission?”

Jung Ok nodded.

“He would give one hundred gold nyangs to anyone who captures Jin Tae Ho.”

“Kekeke. As I thought, a salt merchant has a lot of money.”

When the Ancient Tree Sage smiled in satisfaction, everyone nodded.

Their job was to capture a single merchant.

Of course, the merchant, being the rich man he was, probably had good guards, but they were all very prepared, and since the group contained peak experts, this would be an exceedingly easy job for them.

“Let’s go.”

Three hundred martial artists quietly followed the merchant’s carriage that came out of a building.

They all trembled at the thought of the massacre that would soon ensue.

How long have they been following the carriage?

Once the carriage reached the middle of the mountain, the experts immediately made their move on the carriage.

However on the moment of impact, every single one of them realized that something was horribly wrong.

The Ancient Tree Sage, who was at the very front, got bounced back like a leaf, and a huge amount of people surrounded them.

Upon seeing this, Chu Ilsan's face turned ugly.

‘We’re surrounded?’

But when?

They were the ones who attacked, though.

As Chu Ilsan took out his sword in confusion, someone got off the carriage.

“Yah! How amazing. How did you realize that these people would attack us on this spot? This merchant, Jin Tae Ho, is truly learning new things from you today.”

The fat middle-aged man who was sweating in the middle of winter.

That man's triple chin and giant belly showed just how wealthy he was to the surrounding people.

This was Jin Tae Ho, their target.

Chu Ilsan was unable to run to the man, though.

He was only able to frown at the group of enemies coming towards him.

‘What? They’re all girls?’

The experts who were surrounding him were, surprisingly enough, women.

But Chu Ilsan was unable to underestimate them one bit.

Every single one of them were either first-rates or peak experts.

When Chu Ilsan's jaw dropped at this scene, a voice came out of the carriage.

“Are there any more people?”

Jin Tae Ho took a look at the people who were surrounded in their formation, and he then shook his head.

“No, they’re all people under Gal Mun Hyuk.”

“That’s a bit disappointing.”

A boy wearing glasses stepped off the carriage.

It was Cho Ryu Hyang.

The moment he stepped out, he opened his mouth.

“Assistant Palace Master.”

“Yes?”

The crossdressed woman who had been driving the carriage, Sunwu Cho Rin.

She, who disabled the Ancient Tree Sage with a single lash, took off her mask and kneeled.

“Kill everyone except him.”

“Understood.”

Sunwu Cho Rin stood up with a whip in her hand.

Then, she opened her mouth with eyes that shone with a hint of insanity.

“You heard, right? Kill everyone other than that rat over there.”

“Understood!”

A massacre ensued immediately after.

Everyone, whether they were a normal or a powerful expert, were being slaughtered one-sidedly.

Cho Ryu Hyang looked at all this with a stiff face.

‘I was going to have to see something like this at some point anyway.’

His fists balled up without him knowing it.

When a storm of blood began to rage, Cho Ryu Hyang thought as he bit his lips.

‘I can’t afford to let anyone live anyway.’

This was a strategy to bring out the ones behind Gal Mun Hyuk.

The experts of the Imperial Palace.

Cho Ryu Hyang was thinking of capturing them.

Unfortunately, these experts did not make their move this time.

In that case, there was a need to silence everyone for the sake of the next strategy.

“Shall I join in?”

Cho Ryu Hyang shook his head when No Jin Nyung asked a question.

“No need.”

“Ok.....”

No Jin Nyung made a disappointed face.

He saw a few skilled ones out there, so he was thinking to play around a bit, but the heir forbid him from fighting.

“It is finished.”

After a while, Sunwu Cho Rin came to Cho Ryu Hyang with a bloody whip and reported what happened.

Jin Tae Ho looked at the terrifying yet beautiful visage of the woman with glee.

But when his eyes came in contact with the murderous eyes of Sunwu Cho Rin, he quickly retreated into his carriage.

Cho Ryu Hyang looked at Jin Tae Ho for a second, then turned to Sunwu Cho Rin.

“Move according to the second plan, then cleaning everything up.”

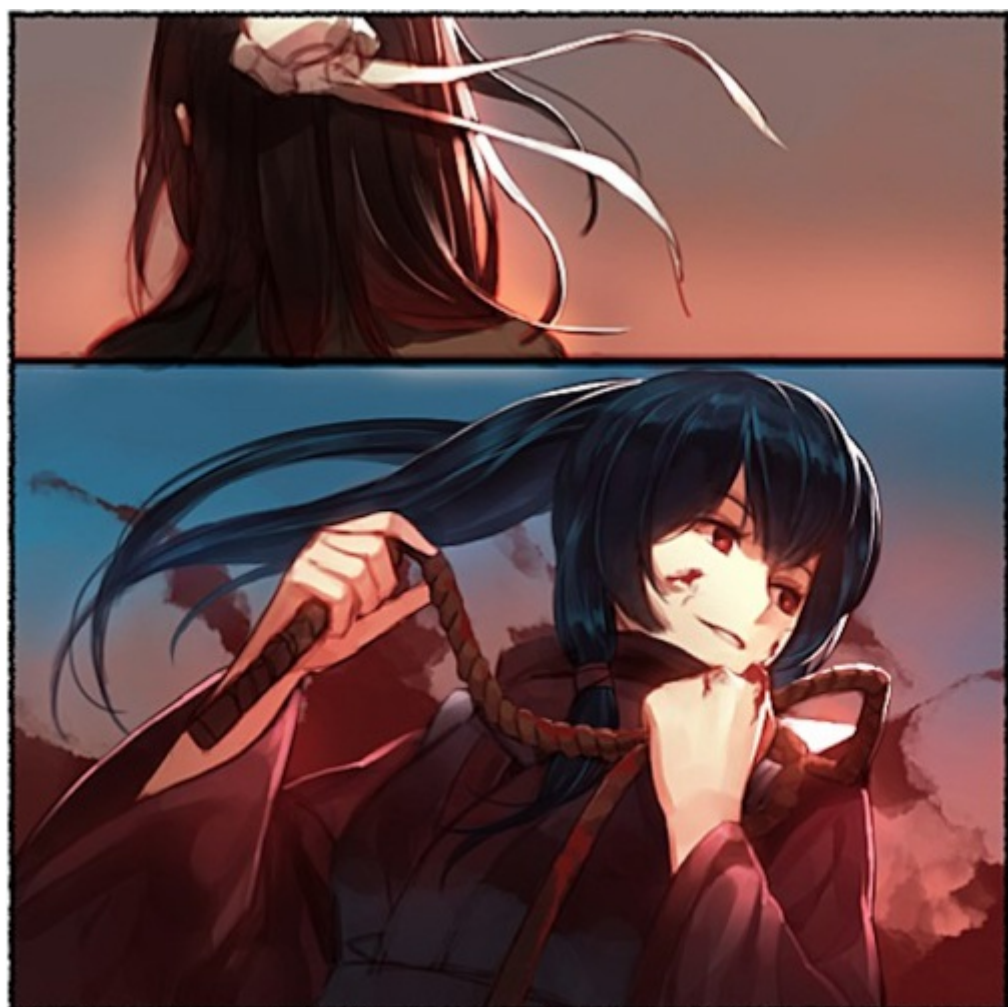
“Understood.”

Cho Ryu Hyang bit his lips as he observed the bloody field.

‘This is only the beginning. I cannot be shaken by this.’

He would only be able to fight the four major powers of the world when he would drag out of Imperial Palace into the scene.

Everything was moving according to plan, but Cho Ryu Hyang’s face was not bright at all.



Chapter 95. Maksu's Appearance

Cho Ryu Hyang came back to the Sichuan branch church with a tired face.

He had to watch Sunwu Cho Rin and her minions decimate a group of people without turning away.

It was mentally exhausting, but he didn't dare to show it.

As a heir to the church, he couldn't show himself being shaken by such things.

Once Cho Ryu Hyang came to the Sichuan branch, he walked to the place where Un Hui was resting.

Un Hui was unable to even sit up for ten straight days.

Thankfully, Cho Ryu Hyang was able to see that the man although he had a pale facepoint, was able to sit down on a chair.

Un Hui had recovered that much.

The moment Cho Ryu Hyang entered the room, Un Hui stood up, walked towards Cho Ryu Hyang, and barely managed to kneel.

“I have worried you much, my lord.”

“.....”



Cho Ryu Hyang was unable to say anything. He just stared at Un Hui silently.

He soon came to his senses and make Un Hui stood up.

“Stop stressing yourself like that with formalities. I heard you almost died from your injuries..... are you alright now?”

“Yes. In Four days I should have completely recovered.”

“How about your internal injuries? Have they healed?”

“Yes, my lord.”

Un Hui smiled bitterly.

His internal injuries were far worse than what it looked like from the outside.

It was all because he used far too much inner energy while running from the experts of the Imperial Palace, and things got dangerous at a certain point

After the mission finished, he recovered with extreme speed.

Thanks to Un Hui’s strength, when the body found its balance, it was able to heal faster.

“I heard you sold most of the salt that you brought.”

“Mm.”

After he sat Un Hui down, Cho Ryu Hyang nodded.

Un Hui carefully spoke with an unusual amount of curiosity.

“If you didn’t make a deal with Gal Mun Hyuk, how did you sell

all the salt?”

From Un Hui’s understanding, without Gal Mun Hyuk’s help, it was impossible to sell salt.

Gal Mun Hyuk, who had ties with the Imperial Palace, was sure to do anything to prevent them from selling anything, and since it was impossible to sell it out in the open, the salt should’ve been just sitting in the storage.....

How did Cho Ryu Hyang manage to sell it?

Cho Ryu Hyang faintly smiled as he had noticed Un Hui’s confusion.

“I decided to think a little differently. It was all thanks to No Jin Nyung.”

“.....That guy actually did something?”

Un Hui looked at Cho Ryu Hyang in disbelief.

He immediately realized how rude he was and looked down.

As this was a response that was unlike Un Hui, Cho Ryu Hyang smiled.

“Yes. He helped me think of trying something new. I’m thankful for that.”

Un Hui looked at No Jin Nyung, who was standing behind Cho Ryu Hyang with a lackadaisical face, with extreme disbelief.

Upon seeing this, No Jin Nyung slowly crossed his arms.

Then, he looked at Un Hui with a glare that clearly transmitted the message: “I’m this kind of a guy.”

“You don’t have to think too complicatedly.”

Cho Ryu Hyang took a sip from a teacup.

“Unlike Gal Mun Hyuk, who waits for customers to come to him, we just decided to go to the customers ourselves to sell the goods.”

The goods here must mean the salt.

Un Hui realized that and became extremely shocked.

“Isn’t that too dangerous?”

This would expose their identity far too much.

If one were to put it simply, Cho Ryu Hyang was visiting each of

the merchants to sell the salt, but wasn't this too dangerous to do?

The goods themselves were far too large, and it was far too expensive as well.

Depending on how things went, it was possible to lose both the goods and the people.

“Right. It's extremely dangerous. That's why we needed a safety device. Something that can make this not as dangerous as it might look.”

Cho Ryu Hyang smiled as he said this.

Safety device?

What's that?

Cho Ryu Hyang watched Un Hui become even more confused and spoke.

“There are two things that we have that makes us superior to Gal Mun Hyuk.”

“What are... they?”

“First, we have the quality of the experts. Second, it's the goods

itself.”

“The salt?”

“Right. Since Gal Mun Hyuk’s salt is in powder form, anyone can tell it’s salt. That’s why they can only sell it at night because they wouldn’t be able to pass the guards in the morning, but the salt we have is different.”

Cho Ryu Hyang took out a cubed rock from his pocket and smiled.

“The rich enjoy decorating their gardens with fancy rocks. Each and every one of these rocks are shaped differently and are colored differently. The country doesn’t monitor it as much, either.”

Un Hui’s eyes widened.

Right.

As decorative rocks were only for the rich, it was inevitable that the nation wouldn’t pay much attention to it.

Cho Ryu Hyang used that to his advantage.

“We used sculptors to modify the stone salt a little and sold it. We tried to make it resemble decorative rocks as much as possible. Thanks to that, we were able to sell salt safely in the morning as

well.”

Being able to sell salt in the morning definitely brought big changes to the salt market.

The quality of the salt was good, and it was able to be sold in the morning.

This was enough to move the hearts of the salt merchants.

And since the seller delivered it to them themselves, it couldn't get any better.

“One thing that I regret though, is the fact that we're selling this at the price of normal salt, but since we can't really be too greedy right now, it was inevitable.”

“.....”

It was easy to see that Cho Ryu Hyang really was disappointed over that one fact.

It was impossible to see the happiness that one would find from someone who thought of an ingenious way to do something.

Something like this wasn't impossible for Cho Ryu Hyang at all. Because of that fact, instead of gloating over the fact that he did something good, Cho Ryu Hyang just kept thinking of what more

he could do.

Un Hui was lost for words.

He knew that the person he served was amazing.

The person's talent and abilities were unfathomable by themselves.

But this kind of wisdom was something unattainable by a child, wasn't it?

It could only emerge after an accumulation of a lot of experience and knowledge.

Un Hui suddenly felt that Cho Ryu Hyang was a person who had surpassed human limits.

“This is the most important part that would allow us to secure our position; thus, I'm going to need a lot of help.”

Un Hui quickly came back to his senses and spoke.

“Your servant shall carry out your commands faithfully.”

Cho Ryu Hyang scratched his cheeks.

“This isn’t a command; it’s a request. You really need to recover faster now. It’s about time our enemies make their move.”

Un Hui became more serious.

The heir was right.

Things were going to get dangerous from now on.

They did a lot of things in Sichuan already. Information about them must have leaked out during that time.

“.....I will try to recover as much as possible by tomorrow.”

Cho Ryu Hyang nodded.

“I will be waiting.”

Cho Ryu Hyang exited the room, so that Un Hui could rest more comfortably.

Although he was able to see No Jin Nyung make fun of Un Hui behind his back, he ignored it.

How long did he walk?

He was able to see someone run towards him.

When Cho Ryu Hyang saw this person, his heart instantly tightened.

‘Again.....’

His heart was beating faster.

Cho Ryu Hyang looked at Gongson Ahri with a complicated face.

“Hello!”

“.....”

Cho Ryu Hyang was only able to nod.

He was able to feel his face get hotter.

‘The conditions are getting worse by the day.’

Cho Ryu Hyang wasn’t able to understand.

Why did he become like this in front of Gongson Ahri?

He didn’t do anything wrong, nor he was hiding anything from her.

But he became extremely nervous in front of her.

His mouth dried out, and his muscles tightened.

It was as if he was in front of his teacher, Gongson Chun Gi.

‘I don’t get it.....’

Gongson Ahri was not his teacher.

He could understand when it came to his teacher since his teacher was quite special, but why Gongson Ahri?

‘Just why?’

As Cho Ryu Hyang contemplated on this, Gongson Ahri opened her mouth.

“Did Maksu come here?”

Maksu?

What about him?

Cho Ryu Hyang became a little confused, but he didn’t show it.

“He didn’t.”

“Ah..... what do I do?”

Gongson Ahri was unable to say anything and could only become agitated.

At the point where Cho Ryu Hyang had calmed a bit, Gongson Ahri spoke.

“It looks like our Maksu has run away.”

The word ‘our’ concerned Cho Ryu Hyang a little, but he decided to act calmly.

“He’ll come back whenever. You don’t have to worry about him.”

Maksu wasn’t something one could worry about.

That thing only harmed. It wasn’t something that could be harmed.

“But he hasn’t come back for 10 days.”

“10 days?”

“Yes.....”

Cho Ryu Hyang began to think.

Ten days was a long time.

The reason why he put the rabbit next to Gongson Ahri was partly because she wanted it, but mostly because Cho Ryu Hyang wanted the thing away from him.

But.....

‘That guy said himself that being away from me was not good for him.’

He didn’t know how exactly ‘far’ this distance was, but he was sure that it would be better for the rabbit to be close to him.

Being away for so long definitely meant that the rabbit was trying to do something.

‘How annoying.’

It was still unclear whether the rabbit was a friend or a foe.

Because of that, Cho Ryu Hyang tried to distance him from the thing as much as possible.

The actions of now must mean that the rabbit was his foe.

‘This is bad.’

Since he had struck a deal with Maksu, he had some trust in him.

But if Maksu comes out to be like this, there will be no way to stop him.

The deal with him would end when Cho Ryu Hyang dies.

In other words, it would be fine for Maksu to bring Cho Ryu Hyang to danger.

Cho Ryu Hyang smiled when he thought of that.

It was useless.

It was inefficient to think of misfortunes that didn’t had even happened.

This was not how Cho Ryu Hyang worked.

“Let’s wait.”

“Will he come back?”

When Gongson Ahri asked this with a worried tone, Cho Ryu Hyang nodded.

“Yes. He’ll definitely be back.”

Right.

After all, he had something Maksu desperately needed.

But the time when Maksu came back was a little faster than what Cho Ryu Hyang had expected.

The rabbit came back that following night.

In a completely different form than Cho Ryu Hyang had expected.....

Chapter 96. Maksu's Identity

Naming a living being is basically a declaration that one would take responsibility for that being.

As parents become responsible for their children after naming them, every living thing becomes tied to the one that names them.

However, there was one being that simply refused to accept that.

It was a dark, moonlit night.

Cho Ryu Hyang woke up in the middle of that night with a splitting pain in his head.

After standing up and doing several stretches, Cho Ryu Hyang became confused of the strange feeling in his head.

‘What was that?’

He felt that somebody had called him during his sleep.

The call was far too clear for it to be a mere dream.

After thinking for a while, Cho Ryu Hyang put on his glasses and went outside.

Shf-

Cho Ryu Hyang held his glasses in one hand and rubbed his eyes with the other. As he came out to the garden, he soon frowned.

It was too quiet.

He couldn't feel the presences of No Jin Nyung nor the Mara's Heavenly Wind Division.

No, that wasn't all.

He couldn't even feel any life from the plants around him.

Was it because of his headache?

Or was he just imagining things?

Whatever the reason was, something was off.

Cho Ryu Hyang looked around with a cautious gaze, and a man in white entered his sight.

“Yo, it's been a while.”

“.....”

The man talked with a friendly tone to Cho Ryu Hyang, and he looked at the man confusedly.

He had never seen the man before.

Even so, there was a strange sense of familiarity about him.

When Cho Ryu Hyang felt two conflicting emotions at once, he became extremely confused.

“You have responsibility over me. That’s why you’re feeling two conflicting feelings at once. Don’t be so confused.”

Cho Ryu Hyang looked at the white-clothed man with a suspicious gaze.

The man almost seemed to be able to read his mind.

“What a clever child. You’re right. I am reading your mind. Here, something like that is indeed possible.”

Boom-!

The man took something out from behind him, and struck it in the ground.

It was something Cho Ryu Hyang had seen before, and at the moment he saw it, he was able to see who the person was.

“.....Maksu?”

“Do not call me by that name. My name is Pian Mu. This is my true form, and that is my true name.”

The man in white frowned deeply as he said this.

“You wouldn’t know, but I paid much in order to get back to this form. This is only temporary, but I definitely have to check something from you.”

Cho Ryu Hyang saw the man’s eyes slowly begin to turn of a scarlet color.

“I need to check if you are actually worthy enough to name me.”

Naming something means that one is taking responsibility over that thing.

And to a nonhuman beings like Pian Mu, naming something that someone had to have greater importance than the one been named.

It means that they would acknowledge that the one who named them is above them.

In truth, when Cho Ryu Hyang first called him ‘Maksu’, Pian Mu was able to feel a powerful energy oppress him.

However Pian Mu was unable to accept this.

‘No way.’

The one who would name him needed to have strength.

No, even if that person didn’t have strength, the person should at least be influential enough to affect many.

‘I can’t accept it.’

Pian Mu wanted to confirm if Cho Ryu Hyang was truly a powerful human.

Right then, Cho Ryu Hyang put on his glasses and spoke.

“Is it fine if you break the promise between us? I thought you nonhuman beings treated promises with great importance?”

“Of course we do. That’s why I came to you like this.”

The man in white, who had two names, grinned a toothy grin.

“Right now, I am Pian Mu. The one who made the promise with

you was Maksu.”

“How nonsensical.”

Cho Ryu Hyang frowned.

He didn’t know Pian Mu would be like this.

He immediately tried to find some kind of a hole in Pian Mu’s statement.

However.

Bang-!

Pian Mu’s pestle flew right past Cho Ryu Hyang’s face and struck the ground.

“Let’s stop the useless talk. We have to decide who is stronger right now, don’t we? Something like this can’t be decided with words.”

The floor that the pestle struck had cracked as if a bomb had gone off on that spot. Several rocks flew out from the shock, one of which had scratched Cho Ryu Hyang’s cheek.

Cho Ryu Hyang felt something warm flow from his cheek, and

when he touched it, his face soon stiffened.

‘Blood?’

Cho Ryu Hyang had been assuming that this place might actually be an illusion.

He thought that this place was something similar to the ‘dream’ that Gongson Chun Gi had shown him before.

But when he actually got injured and felt pain, he began to feel more and more nervous.

He wouldn’t be able to feel pain like this in a mere dream.

Pian Mu, once again, smiled and opened his mouth.

“This is a place that’s between dreams and reality. It’s somewhere inside your head. I forcefully expanded that place in your head and made this place.”

Cho Ryu Hyang’s face stiffened again.

He had no idea what that bastard was about to do.

“I can always kill you in this place. Also, if you die here, you die in real life as well.”

Cho Ryu Hyang shook his hands lightly as he listened.

Then, for some reason, he smiled.

‘There are actually a lot of people who are out to kill me.’

There were people looking to kill him in the church and outside, well... that part didn’t really need any explanation.

But to think that even a nonhuman being would come and try to kill him..... it was almost comical.

It was almost like everyone wanted his life.

‘Come to think of it, how strong is he?’

Pain Mu was extremely powerful just as a rabbit. How strong would it be now?

‘Why am I not afraid?’

The emotion of fear appears when one encounters the unknown.

But Cho Ryu Hyang’s opponent wasn’t something that he didn’t know anything about.

Was it because of that?

Cho Ryu Hyang felt unafraid.

On the contrary, his opponent seemed extremely small.

‘Strange.’

Cho Ryu Hyang became confused.

Why was he not afraid?

Did he go crazy?

That didn’t seem to be the case.

While Cho Ryu Hyang was carefully thinking about his strange mental state, Pian Mu spoke.

“It is possible to do anything you want here. Use all your strength to fight me. If you manage to survive before the red moon sets, I will accept you.”

The red moon?

Cho Ryu Hyang looked up at the sky.

There was a red moon floating there.

When he looked at this moon, he began to get calmer.

After taking a look at the moon for a moment, Cho Ryu Hyang looked at Pian Mu for a bit, and then he opened his mouth.

“Do anything?”

Pian Mu nodded as he stretched out his hand and took back his pestle.

“Yeah. There must’ve been some things you wanted to do, right? Things you were unable to do because of your underdeveloped body. Here, you are able to do all that.”

Cho Ryu Hyang immediately thought of the [heartfelt thought](#). He had been doing it since a while back.

(TL Note: Heartfelt thought appears in chapter 88. Basically it’s a form of training where you can perform all kinds of moves w/o restriction in your brain.)

When he thought of this, he smiled.

He had just realized why he was so unafraid of Pian Mu.

“Maksu..... no, Pian Mu, was it?”

“Right. That’s my name.”

“It seems you made a huge mistake today.”

If he was able to do whatever he wanted like he did in his heartfelt thought training, he was completely unafraid of any enemies.

Everything that Cho Ryu Hyang possessed were extremely powerful, after all.

Cho Ryu Hyang grinned.

He needed to confirm something before they started.

“Anything within my imagination, you say?”

“As long as it’s not something that exceeds your inborn talent.”

Cho Ryu Hyang nodded and stepped forward.

There was something he needed to do before they started.

The moment he thought that, his body quickly began to change.

Crack-!

He began to get much taller, and his body got thicker.

Muscles began to grow from his limbs, and at the same time, his bones became extremely hard.

Pian Mu simply smiled when he saw this.

“You heightened your growth rate? You wouldn’t be able to get used to your new body.”

“No, I did that a long time ago already.”

Cho Ryu Hyang looked down at his new body and smiled.

It was the perfect body to create formations, and at the same time, make full use of the Shura Environment and the Moon Edge Blade Technique.

‘This is good.’

He wasn’t as muscular as Gongson Chun Gi at his height of power, but instead, he was thin and well-balanced.

It was the body he wanted to have when he grew up.

‘Seven years..... no, the me in eight years.’

Cho Ryu Hyang looked down at his hands.

He could then feel something extremely powerful surge inside him.

It was the power of the Shura Environment and the Moon Edge Blade Technique.

“.....You say I needed to survive till the moon sets?”

“Right. Child, can you do it?”

Cho Ryu Hyang smiled.

“I told you that you made a mistake, right?”

“Yeah.”

“I’ll show you why.”

Cho Ryu Hyang made a simple punching motion.

It seemed like a simple, harmless move.

But when Cho Ryu Hyang did this, Pian Mu made a blocking motion with his pestle.

Baang-!

With a giant sound, the ground around Pian Mu broke to pieces, and the air trembled.

Pian Mu began to complain when he felt a throbbing pain on his wrist.

“Humans can have this much power? No way, this doesn’t make sense.”

Cho Ryu Hyang smiled.

He really was able to do anything he wanted here.

“Surprised already? That’s not good. See, my teacher’s even more of a monster than me.”

The punch from before seemed simply, but in truth, it was the single most powerful punch in the world.

It was the same technique Gongson Chun Gi used on Baek Mu Ryang in the past.

The technique that took down Baek Mu Ryang in an instant.

‘Dominating Shura Fist.’

One would expect the technique to be extremely weak due to the simple action performed by its user, but that would be a huge mistake.

The Dominating Shura Fist was one of the more powerful moves in the Shura Environment. The action from before concentrated an immense amount of energy and made it explode.

But of course, something like this didn’t work on Pian Mu.

Cho Ryu Hyang began to focus his power on his leg this time.

‘This time…….’

He needed something stronger.

Cho Ryu Hyang pulled out the power of the Moon Edge Blade Technique.

He then condensed it all into one part of his body.

His leg shot out with extreme speed and struck the air.

Kuaaa-!

Air condensed into a giant lump and shot out towards Pian Mu's stomach.

They were 30 meters away, but distance didn't really matter between them.

Pian Mu calmly looked at the lump of energy that came towards him, then struck it with his fist.

“How annoying.”

The invisible lump of energy and Pian Mu's fist struck each other.

Bang-!

Energy dissipated along with an ear-splitting sound.

Pian Mu's arm trembled.

The pain on his arm showed him just how strong Cho Ryu Hyang's kick just now was.

How can a human even have this much power?

Pian Mu was extremely irritated inside, but he acted fine on the outside.

“What the hell? You were so confident with just this? Or are you just trying to test me?”

The child really was quite amazing.

But that was it.

He was only amazing among humans.

The child still lacked something. He didn't meet Pian Mu's expectations.

Cho Ryu Hyang shook his head.

Although he knew that he didn't damage Pian Mu much, he had a smile on his face.

Unlike what Pian Mu expected, Cho Ryu Hyang was actually enjoying his situation very much.

“I didn't test you. I tested myself, and I managed to get a satisfactory result from that test.”

“Hoh? What was your result?”

“Doable.”

Cho Ryu Hyang had calculated the power difference between him and Pian Mu.

He repositioned his glasses and grinned.

Surprisingly enough, this grin resembled Gongson Chun Gi’s evil grin very much.

“I’ll be going all out now.”

The Shura Environment and the Moon Edge Blade Technique.

They were two forms of martial arts that dominated the heavens.

However, they would not be able to beat Pian Mu by themselves.

That was Cho Ryu Hyang’s conclusion.

‘But if I manage to mix the two?’

The answer he got after much thought.

He was about to try out his newfound solution.



Chapter 97. A Trade

Nothing is free in this world.

If you want to gain something, you lose something as a result.

This was the same for Pian Mu.

In order to gain back half the power he had in the past, Pian Mu had to spend quite a lot.

Before meeting Cho Ryu Hyang, which was about a day ago, he had made a trade with someone.

“Oh? Who’s this? Why did you come here today, maybe.... Pian Mu?”

[Don’t pretend that you haven’t seen me, Jin Jiao. You always look at me, don’t you?]

Maksu was currently talking to a handsome man with a long, blue hair.

That man looked at the tiny rabbit in front of himself and smiled awkwardly.

“Were you able to feel my gaze?”

[Nope.]

“What the? You just guessed?”

[Yeah, you idiot. How would I ever be able to feel you looking at me?]

“You got me.”

The man called Jin Jiao lifted up his two hands with a bitter face.

Even he was surprised that he made a confession like this due to some small talk.

Right then, Maksu crossed his arms and spoke to Jin Jiao with a serious face.

[So are you still doing that useless play with humans?]

“It’s actually pretty fun, you know. It’s fun watching them.”

Jin Jiao played with his hair and grinned.

That grin seemed to contain a twinge of sadness for some reason.

“I’d probably go crazy if I didn’t even have a hobby, you know? Especially with an infinite age like mine... I’m pretty sensitive, you see.....”

[Useless talk.]

“Right, right. Just some mindless jibber-jabber from an old monster. Anyway, why’d you come here?”

[I came to make a trade with you.]

“As expected, it was that, wasn’t it? There’s no way you would come all the way out here otherwise. You hated moving around since a long time back after all.”

[Yeah.]

Jin Jiao. He was one of the few greater monsters left in the human world, and he was someone who valued neutrality and balance.

Maksu looked at the greater monster carefully and opened his mouth.

[Can you undo my curse?]

It would be an impossible feat for others, but for this guy, it might be possible.

The guy must've been accumulating energy for countless years, which probably let him become immensely powerful.

Therefore, Maksu 'assumed' that this guy could undo his curse.

However, Jin Jiao denied Maksu's assumption immediately.

"Ei, not even I could do anything about that nonsensical curse. You think of me too highly."

[So it's impossible for you as well.....]

This was the curse created by the one and only Daode Tianzun.

There was no way such a curse was going to be undone so easily.

"But....."

[But?]

Jin Jiao smiled playfully.

"There is a way to undo it at certain times."

Maksu's eyes widened.

He had never expected something even close to this being possible.

[How?]

Jin Jiao didn't answer and shook his head.

He then stretched out one of his hands towards Maksu with a smile.

“You should tell me what you're going to give me first. You know how I work, don't you?”

Maksu ground his teeth.

[Of course I do. You never make a deal with anyone unless you get twice the amount you give.]

“Hahaha! I'll take that as a praise.”

[What do you want from me?]

Jin Jiao's eyes shone with a golden light at Maksu's words.

“That sounds like you'd give me anything that I want. Did I understand that wrongly?”

[You did not.]

“Hoh? You’ll regret it though?”

[I regretted it already in the past. Tell me what you want before I change my mind.]

Jin Jiao looked at Maksu with a curious gaze.

“Your current name was Maksu, right? Are you perhaps doing this all for that kid who named you?”

[.....Yeah.]

“Just what are you trying to get from the kid?”

Maksu did not respond. He simply looked at Jin Jiao with a complicated gaze.

Jin Jiao looked at Maksu’s eyes, which was a mixture of hurtfulness and a fighting spirit and shook his head.

“Never mind. I asked you something useless. I just want to make a deal and that’s all. I don’t really need to know about what happened to you.”

[What do you want?]

“You should know.”

[Say it yourself.]

“You know that I’ve only wanted one thing since the past. The mark of the beast king, Black Blood. I need that. You aren’t even going to use it, so why not give it to me?”

[.....How laughable. You want to become a beast king? Now?]

“Useless question. Let’s not try to dig into our past, shall we? It just becomes stressful.”

Maksu nodded.

[Alright. I’ll give it.]

“Really?”

[Yeah.]

Jin Jiao smiled strangely.

He crouched on the ground, got to Maksu’s eye level, and spoke.

“I’m telling you this now, but I said this can only be done at certain times.”

[.....Right.]

Maksu became nervous.

When he made a face of defeat, Jin Jiao grinned as if telling Maksu that he needn’t worry.

“It would be good when it’s the time when the full moon or a red moon rises. The curse should be undone at days like those when our power is the strongest. But you would only be able to use half your power at times like those.”

[That’s good enough.]

Right.

It was good enough.

Normally, Maksu wouldn’t even be able to use half of his power.

This was better than nothing.

After all, even if he had just half of his power, there were no

beings in the human world who could beat him.

‘I should do something about my personality.’

Maksu rubbed the back of his head with a bitter face.

As Maksu swore that he would fix his impatience in the near future, Jin Jiao took something out from his pocket.

Maksu became slightly confused when he saw that thing.

[You knew how to make seals?]

“Of course I did. I have a lot of time, you know? You just have to activate this seal to undo it.”

When Maksu nodded, Jin Jiao grabbed onto Maksu’s hands and spoke.

“I’ll take the Black Blood, then.”

[Do what you want.]

Wuun–

Black Blood began to flow from Maksu’s body.

It was the blood of the beast king.

With such a thing as this, it was possible to bring all beings in the world under one's feet.

It was something that had immense power.

Jin Jiao put away Maksu's blood inside a jar and smiled.

“The deal is done, then feel free to come by at any time.”

[.....Bastard.]

Maksu lay down on the ground and complained.

He suddenly became tired when a large amount of his power disappeared.

Maksu tiredly stood back up and burned the seal.

[You say my power would come back on the days when my power was the strongest?]

“Yes.”

[Alright. Thanks.]

Maksu stumbled a bit, then managed to straighten up his body.

Then, he immediately teleported himself away.

Jin Jiao looked at Maksu for a moment, then opened his mouth.

“You can come out now, Lord Sun Wukong.”

“I was about to.”

A black-haired man appeared out of nowhere.

The moment he appeared, the man stretched out his hand.

“Give it.”

“Nn.....”

When Jin Jiao made a complicated face for a moment, Sun Wukong smiled.

“What? Do you really want to try being a king? I can just give it to you, you know?”

“No, it just doesn’t feel good to give it to you without getting anything back.”

“Don’t be so greedy. I was the one who gave you that seal, you know?”

“Do you even know how hard it is to act like this? Isn’t it too much to work me for free like this?”

“That’s why I bought you some alcohol. To get you more motivated to swindle the rabbit, yeah?”

“Swindle? No, the only thing I did was.....”

Before Jin Jiao spoke any further, Sun Wukong snatched the jar of blood away and spoke.

“Tell me before I change my mind. I can give this thing to you.”

“.....Hn, it was just passing words.”

“Isn’t it hard, trying to be not greedy at all like that?”

“It’s not that hard when you get used to it.”

Jin Jiao’s complicated eyes disappeared, and they were replaced with calm eyes.

“But why do you care for Pian Mu that much? You don’t even know him that well.”

“Hmm..... how do I explain? I feel like I relate to the guy? Well, there’s something like that.”

“Is that really all?”

Sun Wukong grinned.

“Well, honestly, it’s because watching him is interesting..... But it’s also because someone asked me to take care of him.”

“Take care of who, Pian Mu?”

“No, I mean the guy that Pian Mu’s with. Cho Ryu Hyang, was it?”

Jin Jiao became extremely surprised and literally jumped out of his seat.

“Who the hell asked you to take care of a human? Is he crazy?”

“Yeah, I know. I was surprised too, but that guy who asked me to take care of the boy is kind of hard to refuse.”

“Who was it?”

“Well, you know. That dragon that came up a while ago. Tian Nu, was it?”

Jin Jiao blinked a few times, remembered something and opened his mouth.

“Ah..... That yinglong who became a godly dragon?”

“Yeah. That guy came to be personally and requested me to do this. As a boss, I can’t ignore my underling’s requests, you know? I should at least pretend to do it.”

Sun Wukong rubbed his cheeks and looked up at the sky with a smile.

“but helping the boy anymore than this would break the laws of heaven, so we should stop here. Right, Tian Nu?”

Jin Jiao made a fed up face when he heard Sun Wukong’s words.

“That kid has quite a background for a human.”

“He’s an interesting child.”

Sun Wukong looked at Pian Mu disappear into the distance and

smiled.

“Anyway, that guy really is getting cuter by the moment. Why the hell is he trying to go back to his original state anyway? Just look at that pleasantly plump as..”

“.....No comment.”

Jin Jiao looked forward complicatedly.

He had been watching Pian Mu before, but now he was looking at something else.

He was looking at the one Pian Mu was heading to.

He was looking at the human child wearing glasses.

‘Why did Yinglong feel the need to ask such a thing to Sun Wukong?’

It was an interesting story.

The child who managed to make Sun Wukong himself move.

Jin Jiao became interested in the child.

The Moon Edge Blade Technique worked only when one looked inside of oneself.

It worked when one talked to the inner workings of their body.

This was the core of the Moon Edge Blade Technique.

Cho Ryu Hyang balled up his fists and looked at Pian Mu.

He was not going to do something that he refused to do before.

‘I will attempt to talk to the Shura Environment inside my body.’

It took quite a bit of courage to look at the Shura Environment body.

Because the Shura Environment had the tendency to go out of control, Cho Ryu Hyang tried his best to not even look at it until he had enough power.

‘The combined consciousness of the past popes.....’

Cho Ryu Hyang bit his teeth.

He had no idea how powerful that thing was going to be.

He might actually be overtaken by the thing that was the Shura Environment.

‘But I have to do it.’

There was no choice.

There was no way to defeat that monster called Pian Mu otherwise.

Cho Ryu Hyang needed to understand his two techniques perfectly and use them to his advantage.

Cho Ryu Hyang bit his teeth and focused.

Then, Pian Mu, along with his body, slowly started to disappear.

He then sunk deep inside his consciousness.

Pian Mu watched this with a great expectation.

He didn’t know what the kid was trying to do, but he decide to wait.

‘Take out everything that you have.’

Cho Ryu Hyang.

Pian Mu wished to see just what that kid was made of.



Chapter 98. The Cure For The Bloodlust

The Shura Environment.

This technique was something that branched off of the first Heavenly Demon's Technique.

It was something that was created by taking only the most destructive parts of the original.

No one really knew who was the first one to made this technique.

Cho Ryu Hyang tilted his head in confusion.

He could remember focusing his consciousness on the Shura's Gem in his body.

'Where am I.....'

A well-trimmed yard along with a small hill.

Cho Ryu Hyang watched deers run by him and observed the small stream of water flow nearby, then frowned.

'This is a dream inside dreams. Let's not get distracted.'

A while ago, Cho Ryu Hyang was inside the dream that Maku

made.

He entered a dream from a dream, so he cannot afford to become confused of where he was.

Cho Ryu Hyang shook his head and walked forward.

This was probably the illusion that the Shura Environment was showing him.

In that case, his target probably wasn't far.

Cho Ryu Hyang's expectations didn't fail him. After a short walk, he was able to feel someone's presence.

No, to be more specific, it seemed as if the being there let himself be seen for Cho Ryu Hyang.

Cho Ryu Hyang walked towards that presence.

When he walked over a small hill, he was able to see a thatched roof house.

It wasn't too far off, so he arrived only after a short moment.

He found a single old man who was sitting on the pavilion of the house.

Cho Ryu Hyang's eyes shined when he looked at the old man.

He immediately realized that the man was the master of this place.

In other words, this man was the master of the Shura's Gem inside his body.

This man was the creator of the Shura Environment.

The old man spoke first.

“You're the disciple of that annoying idiot.”

Annoying idiot?

When Cho Ryu Hyang made a confused face, the old man faintly smiled as he put out the smoke from his pipe.

“I'm talking about that idiot from the Gongson family.”

Cho Ryu Hyang realized that the man was talking about Gongson Chun Gi, his teacher.

Cho Ryu Hyang nodded candidly and looked at the old man in front of him strangely.

How many people would be able to describe his teacher in such a way?

‘Well, he is a person from the past.....’

And since this person was someone who created the Shura Technique, it was understandable that the man would look down on his teacher.

Even so, Cho Ryu Hyang looked at the old man with an interested gaze.

The old man dusted off his pants and stood up.

“There must be a reason why you came here, right?”

Cho Ryu Hyang nodded.

He needed to make the Shura Environment his.

It would be bad if it went out of control.

After thinking a bit, Cho Ryu Hyang asked a question.

“Are you the one who created the Shura Environment?”

“Yes. The Shura Environment is mine.”

The Shura Environment is mine?

Cho Ryu Hyang felt something strange from the old man's answer.

What was it?

The old man's way of speaking was strange.

He decided to delve deeper.

“May I know of your name?”

The old man's face wrinkled a bit when he heard this.

“What? You came here without even knowing my name? Wait, how did you even get here, then? What a strange child.”

When the old man made a surprised face, Cho Ryu Hyang scratched his cheeks with a shrug.

“.....There are no records of you.”

Right.

Strangely enough, while there were plenty of records on the Heavenly Demon Technique itself, there was nearly nothing recorded when it came to the Shura Technique.

Even if there was a lot, since the history of the technique was transferred to the heir orally, only a little of the information could be passed down.

“This is why you shouldn’t get a dumb heir. Nothing ever works according to your plan.”

The old man sat complaining for a short while.

Then, he sat back down and opened his mouth.

“Child, you say you are curious of my name?”

“Yes, elder.”

Who is he?

The man was most likely an expert hidden by the great river of time and one of the greatest popes of all time.

Cho Ryu Hyang looked at the old man with an expectant gaze.

The old man spoke with a sour face.

“Hong Sunwon.”

“.....What?”

“My name’s Hong Sunwon.”

Hong Sunwon?

It sounds a little familiar?

At that moment, a single word struck Cho Ryu Hyang’s head like lightning.

“Heavenly Demon (天魔)?”

“Yeah. I’m the creator of the church, Heavenly Demon Hong Sunwon.”

Cho Ryu Hyang became extremely surprised.

The old man in front of him was more of a monster than he had thought.

There was nearly nothing known about the original Heavenly Demon.

Although his achievements have been passed down through the ages, there was nothing on his personal life.

There were only records written by passing observers.

It was quite interesting, actually.

Normally, there would've been all kinds of records about the man, ranging from how he affected the world, all the way to what his daily life was like, but the reality was different.

When Cho Ryu Hyang asked why things were like this, the old man thought a moment before answering.

“It’s all because my disciple was far too dumb.”

“.....”

“He just couldn’t make my plans progress. He developed quite an inferiority complex because of that. He probably erased all records of me because of his feelings. That idiot.”

The old man. No, the Heavenly Demon swore at his disciple for quite a bit, then lit his pipe and turned to Cho Ryu Hyang.

“Child, do you know who my heir was?”

Cho Ryu Hyang nodded.

He had memorized the names of all the popes in the past.

“The Ten Thousand Evils Emperor.”

“Right. I had to change the Heavenly Demon Technique because of that idiot. That’s how the Shura Environment came into existence.”

Cho Ryu Hyang nodded.

He remembered hearing something about this in the past.

But the Ten Thousand Evils Emperor wasn’t as dumb as the Heavenly Demon made the man out to be.

That man was the person who expanded the influence of the church further into the nation after the death of the Heavenly Demon.

The man just didn’t meet the Heavenly Demon’s expectations. In truth, he was quite an amazing person.

Cho Ryu Hyang, while thinking of all this, suddenly thought of a

question, and carefully opened his mouth.

“Is the Heavenly Demon Technique better than the Shura Environment?”

The Heavenly Demon smiled upon hearing this question.

“An incomplete question.”

After staring at Cho Ryu Hyang for a little bit, the man opened his mouth again.

“It all depends on the practitioner’s talent. Martial arts techniques are only there to assist.”

Cho Ryu Hyang nodded. This was similar to what his teacher had told him in the past.

When he thought about it, it really was a stupid question.

“You came here to be able to use the Shura Environment well, didn’t you?”

“Yes.”

“So you’re smarter than that Gongson Chun Gi.”

“Do you know my teacher well?”

“Of course I do. He learned the Shura Environment. There’s no way I wouldn’t know about him.”

When the Heavenly Demon answered his question gruffly, Cho Ryu Hyang made a confused face.

“Teacher said that there was a side effect to the Shura Environment. Do you know about this?”

“Of course I do? After all, I was the one who created it.”

Cho Ryu Hyang’s eyes widened.

“You made it on purpose?”

“Not exactly, but I’m making the side effect particularly bad for Gongson Chun Gi. I don’t like him.”

What does that mean?

Cho Ryu Hyang made a confused face.

“Do you not understand?”

“Yes. It sounds a bit complicated.”

“It’s not complicated at all.”

The Heavenly Demon quietly looked at Cho Ryu Hyang and spoke with a low voice.

“I purposefully made it so that the side effect is particularly bad for Gongson Chun Gi.”

Cho Ryu Hyang became even more confused.

“You can choose who gets a worse side effect?”

“Yeah.”

This was a new bit of information.

Cho Ryu Hyang fixed his glasses and asked another question.

“May I know why you made it so bad for my teacher?”

“It’s simple. I don’t like him. He has no respect for his elders.”

“.....”

It really was simple.

And due to the nature of Gongson Chun Gi's personality, Cho Ryu Hyang was only able to take it in without any resistance.

The Heavenly Demon kept talking with a wrathful voice.

“There's no need to even talk about the others. They were all useless. They didn't have the qualifications to meet me. Gongson Chun Gi was different. He had all the qualifications, but.....”

“.....But?”

“He didn't come to meet me. He only tried to work me like a servant. Wouldn't that make a senior like me mad?”

“.....”

“Well..... I can't even do anything with him now since that guy passed on the Shura's Gem to you, I can't plague him with the side effect any more.”

Cho Ryu Hyang's eyes shone with hope.

“Does that mean that teacher would be able to get rid of his side effect?”

“Yeah. Unfortunately.”

This was good news.

He knew how hard his teacher had tried to get rid of the side effect.

When Cho Ryu Hyang made a happy face, the Heavenly Demon only became more annoyed.

“Are you that happy?”

“Yes. Teacher would finally be able to accomplish his wish.”

The Heavenly Demon was a little taken aback by Cho Ryu Hyang’s honesty.

“That arrogant idiot really did get a good disciple. How lucky, but why do you keep trying to anger me when you came to get rid of the side effect? I don’t like Gongson Chun Gi. It would be bad if you take his side?”

Cho Ryu Hyang answered this with a smile.

“I know you aren’t that close-minded. You took care of your successors very well if I recall.”

One of the few records of the Heavenly Demon stated that he treated talented people with great care.

He had treated anyone, whether they be friend or foe, with compassion as long as they were talented.

When Cho Ryu Hyang said this, the Heavenly Demon licked his lips and answered.

“It is true that I like talented juniors, but Gongson Chun Gi’s an exception. I just don’t like him anymore.”

“How about me, then?”

“You are.....”

After looking at Cho Ryu Hyang for a moment, the Heavenly Demon opened his mouth.

“You have talent as well as luck. Not bad. Too bad you’re under Gongson Chun Gi’s guidance.”

“I’ll take that as a complement.”

When Cho Ryu Hyang said this with a smile, the Heavenly Demon threw the tobacco in his pipe to the ground and spoke.

“What do you think is the side effect of the Shura Environment?”

“I had heard that it was bloodlust.”

“That’s what most people seem to think, but it’s wrong. Bloodlust isn’t everything.”

“What is it, then?”

Even Gongson Chun Gi thought that bloodlust was the side effect.

“Bloodlust doesn’t even count as a side effect. In fact, it’s what a person who walks on the path of the demons needs. One would only be able to become powerful as they become charmed more and more by blood and violence.”

Was that how it was?

Cho Ryu Hyang made a face of disgust, but the Heavenly Demon kept on talking.

“The real side effect appears when one becomes too enamored by the power of the Shura Environment. When that happens, then the user would give up his body. To me.”

“What?”

Give up his body?

To whom?

Did the Heavenly Demon read the confusion in Cho Ryu Hyang's face?

The man struck his chest a few times and spoke.

“The practitioner would give up his body for me. As a sacrifice.”

“.....”

Cho Ryu Hyang became even more confused.

He wasn't quite sure what that meant.

“Don't you know of human sacrifice? Who is the god of the church? It's me, isn't it?”

“.....!”

“This is the truth of the Shura Environment.”

Cho Ryu Hyang looked at the Heavenly Demon with an astonished face.

He was unable to say anything due to his surprise.

The Heavenly Demon looked at this happily and spoke.

“Finally, we can talk more seriously.”

Cho Ryu Hyang nodded dumbly.

“Now, would you like to learn about the real Shura Environment?”

The real Shura Environment?

Cho Ryu Hyang’s eyes began to brighten.

“Well, you don’t really have no choice, now that you’re here. Try learning it, why don’t you. Smash everyone outside after that. Show them the power of the demons.”

“Conquest of the world.....”

“Right. That’s what I desire to see. It’s also why I exist here.”

The Heavenly Demon’s eyes burned with desire.

The same flame began to appear inside Cho Ryu Hyang’s eyes as well.



Chapter 99. Cho Ryu Hyang Finds A Clue

Pian Mu became quite bored as he waited for Cho Ryu Hyang.

The boy really was taking his time.

But at that precise moment, Pian Mu's ears twitched.

Cho Ryu Hyang's body began trembling for some reason.

At the same time, a mysterious aura flowed from the boy's body.

Vuun-

“Hoh? Finally awake?”

The aura that surrounded Cho Ryu Hyang had a purple tinge and was extremely strange.

Pian Mu looked at this with an interested face, but then Cho Ryu Hyang's trembling heightened even more.

Something was wrong.

‘What's going on?’

It looked like Cho Ryu Hyang was waking, but something was different.

A little while later, Cho Ryu Hyang opened his eyes.

Pian Mu frowned when their eyes met.

This wasn't the person he had been waiting for.

“What the hell? How did you get in here?”

“.....”

Cho Ryu Hyang did not respond. Instead, he looked around for a moment.

His eyes emanated with a purple light.

A glint of maturity and age could be seen from those eyes.

“I will ask you again, human. Zhuge Liang, was it? How did you get in here?”

Zhuce Liang did not respond.

He simply looked at his own body with a curious gaze.

Then, he smirked.

“I was wondering what you two were doing..... what a fun game you’re playing, Pian Mu.”

“Answer my question. How did you get in here?”

Pian Mu gripped his pestle with a big frown.

He didn’t understand.

This was his world.

The world he made for Cho Ryu Hyang.

And he had specifically designed the place to block out that old man.

How did he get in?

Pian Mu’s eyes were filled with surprise and suspicion.

“You must be quite surprised.”

“That’s an understatement. You are a strange being. Not even

gods can ignore the natural laws like you do. Who the hell are you?”

“There’s no need for me to tell you.”

“You should, if you don’t want to die. This is my world, you know?”

“How interesting.”

Zhuge Liang was taunting Pian Mu.

Pian Mu grinned.

“There are those who only regret things after death.”

Pian Mu gripped his pestle even harder.

Come to think of it, he had something to give back to this this man, didn’t he?

It would be good to pay the man back now.

But at that moment, Zhuge Liang flinched and looked back at his body. He spoke with a regretful voice.

“Unfortunately, it doesn’t look like I’ll be able to play with you

today.”

“Why? Feeling scared now?”

“Unfortunately, it looks like this child is about to wake up.”

Zhuge Liang pointed to Cho Ryu Hyang’s body and smiled.

Pian Mu, in return, made a disappointed face.

Before he went back, Zhuge Liang opened his mouth.

“Is it alright to give you an advice before I leave?”

Pian Mu tried to wave him away.

“Just leave. Do I seem that laughable to you? I just lost last time because I underestimated you.”

Right.

He only lost because he underestimated his enemy.

The same thing won’t happen twice.

Zhuge Liang simply nodded in response and spoke.

“You seem to be misunderstanding something. I never looked down on you.”

“Shut your mouth, human.”

He didn't like him.

He didn't like how the man spoke as if he knew everything.

Did this man even know how great of a being he was?

As Pian Mu scrunched up his face and twitched his ears in annoyance, Zhuge Liang spoke.

“Aren't you curious why you got chased out into the human world?”

“.....?”

Pian Mu's eyes shook.

He then glowered at Zhuge Liang with suspicion.

“How would you know anything about that?”

How dare a human try to talk of the matters of heaven.

It was outrageous.

Zhuge Liang simply smiled when he saw Pian Mu's face of distrust.

“Be careful of your arrogance. You are only going through hardships like this because you have a great role in the future. You will ascend to the heavens according to the laws of nature, so you do not need be so rushed to return.”

“.....”

Pian Mu's eyes shook slightly.

At first glance, these words simply seemed nonsensical and fancy.

But as these words strangely fit into Pian Mu's current situation quite well, they had a great power of persuasion.

This made Pian Mu confused.

‘Who is this guy?’

What was this person?

Pian Mu was extremely confused, and he did not know what to do.

At that time, Zhuge Liang crossed his arms and spoke.

“It’s time. You should be able to see what you have wanted once the child wakes.”

Pian Mu made a complicated face as Zhuge Liang left Cho Ryu Hyang’s body.

The man had left before he could confirm anything.

And at that moment, Cho Ryu Hyang’s body began to tremble slightly.

This time, the trembling was extremely stable and seemed comforting.

Pian Mu opened his mouth when the boy’s eyes opened.

Finally, he got the person he had wanted to see.

“You made me wait too long, child.”

Cho Ryu Hyang nodded.

He immediately tried gathering power in his fingers and smiled.

He felt a satisfactory amount of power from it.

“I’m sorry for making you wait, Maksu.”

“Damn it! I told you not to call me by that name! I’m really pissed right now too!”

Pian Mu swung his pestle several times and opened his mouth.

“You might as well just serve to be my stress relief.”

Vuun-

There were no warnings whatsoever.

Pian Mu’s pestle simply cut through the wind towards Cho Ryu Hyang’s skull.

Baang-!

An unfathomably deep hole appeared with a loud bang.

Cho Ryu Hyang looked at this from afar and laughed.

“He’s stronger than my teacher, in terms of physical strength alone.”

A small mutter escaped Cho Ryu Hyang’s lips.

At the same time, the boy took off his glasses and put them in his pocket.

He could see now.

He could see how powerful his teacher was.

He could see that Gongson Chun Gi had probably reached the limits of humanity.

And once he realized that, he understood and gained something.

‘The second state of the Moon Edge Blade Technique.’

He was about to figure out what the next state after Ryun, Tong (通: connection), was.

This in truth was a great gain.

As Cho Ryu Hyang organized the newfound information in his brain, Pian Mu opened his mouth.

“A long time ago, someone high up in the heavens told me something.”

“.....”

“There is only one reason why humans are so fearsome.”

Tuk-

After putting the pestle on one side of his shoulders, Pian Mu spoke.

“Potential. I was told to be alert of humans and respect them at the same time because of that.”

The potential to become anything and achieve anything.

Pian Mu was told not to underestimate humans because of that.

“But I don’t believe any of that. It’s all bullshit.”

A faint killing intent emanated out of Pian Mu’s eyes.

Humans were weak and stupid.

They were extremely greedy as well.

Fear those things?

No way. There was no way such a thing was possible.

Cho Ryu Hyang didn't say anything.

“Prove to me that humans have ‘potential’; otherwise, you’ll just become a lump of flesh by the time I’m done with you.”

Cho Ryu Hyang cracked his hands a few times and tilted his head.

“I don’t understand why you’re telling me all this, but I do want to tell you this one thing.”

“What, your last words?”

Cho Ryu Hyang shook his head.

“I am thankful for you doing this.”

“What? Thankful? Puhaha! Did you finally go crazy or something?”

When Pian Mu mockingly said this, Cho Ryu Hyang scratched his cheeks.

“Thanks to the world you made here, I was able to understand some things that I was unable to understand in all this time. This is extremely fortunate from me. Thank you.”

Pian Mu's lips twitched when he felt the honesty from Cho Ryu Hyang's words.

“Be thankful when you get out, but do you even think that you'd be able to survive here?”

“Who knows.....”

Before he understood a small portion of Tong, he was confident of winning.

His power just felt that great.

But now, he only felt powerless.

He was now able to feel the immense power that Pian Mu possessed.

It wasn't martial arts, nor was it a form of magic, but the difference between them based on pure power was far too big.

“For now.....”

But that didn't mean Cho Ryu Hyang had given up.

'It's not like I can't win.'

Cho Ryu Hyang beckoned Pian Mu to attack.

Pian Mu looked at Cho Ryu Hyang for a single moment, then struck out with his palm with extreme speed.

Kuang-!

"Are you playing with me here?"

Cho Ryu Hyang nodded.

"Yeah."

"What?"

"You told me, didn't you? Survive till it becomes dawn. Just surviving seems easy enough."

"Crazy bastard....."

Pian Mu became extremely mad.

Just what did he expect from humans in the first place?

Did he think that this particular one would be different or something?

When Pian Mu unexpectedly found himself agreeing with the suspicion that just rose up in his mind, a wrathful flame rose up.

And this wrath naturally poured out to Cho Ryu Hyang.

“I’ll kill you.”

If this really was someone who didn’t even deserve his respect, it was better to kill that person off at once.

When Pian Mu charged out in anger, Cho Ryu Hyang quickly moved back whilst punching towards his attacker.

Kuangkuangkuang-!

Nothing struck Pian Mu.

To Pian Mu, Cho Ryu Hyang’s attacks felt just like a little child’s fists.

Cho Ryu Hyang could do nothing but retreat.

Kukakaka-!

Babababang-!

Everything that came out of Cho Ryu Hyang's hands were all high-class moves of the Shura Environment as well as the Moon Edge Blade Technique.

Each and every one of his attacks would render just about any martial artist speechless.

But.....

None of these attacks reached Pian Mu.

Pian Mu frowned whenever Cho Ryu Hyang attacked, and in the end, he put his hand up with a tired face.

“Is this all? Is this everything you have?”

“.....”

Cho Ryu Hyang was attacking as hard as he could.

He was dodging and attacking skillfully, but this was only because Pian Mu was going easy on him.

Both Cho Ryu Hyang and Pian Mu knew this.

“.....then I’ll slit your stomach and take the Dragon’s Pearl.”

He had endured enough.

When Pian Mu stretched out his hands, Cho Ryu Hyang suddenly began to get attracted to his opponent.

Cho Ryu Hyang tried his utmost to resist, but it was of no use.

It only slowed down his impending doom a little.

“The end.”

The moment when Pian Mu lifted his pestle and tried to smash Cho Ryu Hyang’s head, Cho Ryu Hyang grinned.

“That’s my line.”

Pa-Pa- Paa-!

Lights appeared from the surrounding area.

At the same time, the floor shook greatly.

“A formation? You didn’t even have a core though, so when?”

Pian Mu had known that the boy was creating a formation since a while back.

In fact, this was the part he paid the most attention to, so how?

“Did you.....”

Pian Mu looked down at the light that spilled from the ground below him with an astounded face.

Cho Ryu Hyang, who was trying to resist Pian Mu’s pull, suddenly jumped towards the man.

This formation wasn’t the only attack he had.

Pian Mu was slightly surprised by this, but he immediately became calm.

He was confident that no human could even injure him.

At that time, Cho Ryu Hyang shot forward with his hands near his chest.

At the empty space between the two hands was a white ball of

light.



“Eat this.”

When the Shura Environment meets the Moon Edge Blade Technique, they try to repel each other.

That was because the nature of the two techniques were far too different.

Based on this phenomenon, Cho Ryu Hyang created this move.

It worked by condensing two opposing powers in a small area and making it explode.

The moment he threw this ball of light, Cho Ryu Hyang felt the formation under him activate.

And in a moment, the two disappeared from the area.

Chapter 100. Theoretical Formation

Sunwu Cho Rin decided to head out for once.

She separated herself from her guards and went outside secretly.

She was being extremely cautious of any followers.

After walking in circles for quite some time, she entered a teahouse and immediately began to swear.

“Hey, you dogshit! Are you crazy? How dare an ugly person like you request an emergency meeting? Do you think I’m your lover or something? Is that how it is?”

“Ha, haha, sorry, little family head. The higher-ups wanted to get this done as fast as possible. I’m actually under a lot of stress as well. Please understand with your merciful self.”

In the teahouse, a man in a worker’s clothes was profusely asking for forgiveness.

Sunwu Cho Rin looked at the man with slitted eyes for a moment, then she smirked.

“Did my father tell you to flatter me like that?”

“.....Yes. He told me or you’d beat me to death otherwise.”

“He’s right about that.”

The man, whose name was Sunwu Se Ok, was the leader of the Sunwu Family’s darkness, the Earth Dragon Brigade.

That man that was looking at Sunwu Cho Rin was being extremely polite.

Their class was different.

Although they both used the last name of Sunwu, Sunwu Cho Rin was a direct descendent while Sunwu Se Ok was from a branch family.

The four families of the church separated ranks according to blood.

Sunwu Cho Rin leaned back on her chair and spoke.

“There is a harmonious expert near the heir.”

“Yes. I heard there were two, but one of them is severely injured, so why not attack now?”

Sunwu Cho Rin made a strange face.

“I had thought that it would be alright to attack as well..... but there’s something that bugs me a little. Let’s wait for now.”

Sunwu Se Ok frowned.

“Apologies, but may I know what is that thing that bugs you so much? It would help us a great deal.”

“Do you really want to know?”

“Yes.”

“Do you really have to hear it?”

“Is it something private?”

“No, not really.”

“Then tell us.”

Sunwu Cho Rin looked at Sunwu Se Ok with a discontent face.



But not even her could do anything to Sunwu Se Ok.

Not only was he her cousin, but he was also one of the strongest experts in the family.

‘He’s a man, as well.’

It was infuriating, but a woman could not become the family

patriarch.

Just because Sunwu Se Ok was a man, he was higher than her in terms of becoming the next heir.

He was smart as well.

Although he was handling the shadowy matters in the family. Once everything sorts itself out, he would be qualified to fight for the position of the heir.

Of course, his chance of succeeding would be extremely small.

After thinking for a bit, Sunwu Cho Rin opened her mouth with an annoyed face.

“It’s intuition.”

“.....What?”

What did he hear just now?

Sunwu Se Ok wasn’t sure if he heard right.

“It’s a woman’s intuition. The heir definitely is hiding something.”

“.....A woman’s intuition?”

“Yes.”

Sunwu Se Ok looked at his beautiful mistress with an astounded face.

What the woman was saying was ridiculous.

Did she expect him to just wait, because of her intuition?

Did she really expect him to give up a perfect time to strike the heir?

There was no way he would do that.

Sunwu Se Ok sighed and opened his mouth.

“The people from the main house have moved, and it looks like people from the other families are coming as well. There’s no way we can just wait without being given a proper reason.”

Sunwu Cho Rin’s eyes narrowed.

At the same time, a cruel smile floated up her face.

“It’s not my fault if you all die, ok?”

“.....Right, right, of course.”

When Sunwu Se Ok answered her with a bitter face, Sunwu Cho Rin's smile just kept getting bigger.

“Do what you want, then. It doesn't matter to me what you do, but one thing is for sure. If you go by yourselves, you will fail, and there will be no second chance. The heir is quite smart, you see. At least a hundred times smarter than you.”

“.....”

Sunwu Se Ok's eyebrows bunched up together.

He was conflicted.

He wanted to proceed with the plan after taking into account all the variables that might affect him.

However it wasn't like he could wait to find the variables just because of Sunwu Cho Rin.

‘What to do.....’

As Sunwu Se Ok became more and more troubled, Sunwu Cho Rin became troubled as well.

‘Why do I feel so cautious of the heir?’

Like Sunwu Se Ok said, it was a good time to attack the heir.

But she hesitated.

Why?

Was it because of Cho Ryu Hyang is tactical genius?

Sunwu Cho Rin shook her head.

‘There’s definitely something else.’

Right.

There was something ‘special’ that Cho Ryu Hyang had.

They couldn’t just attack because he seemed weak.

‘We’ll see what he has in time.’

Sunwu Cho Rin took a look at Sunwu Se Ok and smirked.

This guy definitely wouldn't make his move especially when he became suspicious of something.

Of course, he was thinking carefully to himself now, but in the end, he wouldn't do anything.

He was overly cautious when it came to things like this.

But even if the four families do not move, there were countless places that sought the death of Cho Ryu Hyang.

This was especially true, now that the four families went out to bait out these groups.

'I can find out what he has at that time.'

There would be no need to fear Cho Ryu Hyang's trump card after he shows it to the public.

The four families weren't weak enough to be defeated by something they knew.

Pian Mu wiped away the blood at his abdomen with a surprised expression.

"What was that?"

Cho Ryu Hyang inched backwards with sweat pouring out of his pores.

He had succeeded in using the powers of the Shura Environment and the Moon Edge Blade Technique together.

But it had used far too much power.

‘I need time.’

His body felt like it was completely void of any energy.

At the same time, it became heavy like a wet sponge.

As Cho Ryu Hyang tried his utmost to gather more power, Pian Mu looked at the tiny hole in his belly and grinned like a child.

He licked the blood on his fingers.

“This is the first time any human has injured me. I praise you for that.”

This time, Cho Ryu Hyang smiled.

“Should I be thankful?”

“Of course. I’m a great person, you see.”

“I must’ve poked a hole in your brain by accident.”

Pian Mu casually put his pestle on his shoulder.

“Why don’t you rest? You’re tired, aren’t you?”

“.....”

When Cho Ryu Hyang did not respond, Pian Mu smashed the pestle into the ground and leaned on it.

“That much power is too much for any human, but anyway, are you crazy? What kind of an idiot gets stuck in his own formation?”

Cho Ryu Hyang simply sighed.

“This isn’t the first time I got stuck in my own formation.”

“What?”

“Yes. I’m an idiot.”

Cho Ryu Hyang used his toes to begin to draw strange shapes on the ground.

Pian Mu didn't interfere and just watched on with a curious face.

“Who did you learn how to make formations from thin air? I haven't seen this even from where I lived in the past.”

Cho Ryu Hyang paused.

His eyes shook for a moment as he turned to Pian Mu.

“From my teacher.”

“Hoh? The pope of the Demon Church, was it? The father of that yellow-haired girl.”

Cho Ryu Hyang shook his head.

The person in his mind was the man who, after much experimentation and study, taught Cho Ryu Hyang much of what he knew today.

It was Jo Gi Chun.

“.....It's a different person.”

“Really? What a talented person. Something like this is hard even for me.”

When Pian Mu praised Cho Ryu Hyang's teacher, the boy was able to immediately recover.

“Right. Even you would have a hard time getting out.”

It would be troublesome if it was easy.

Just how was this formation made?

How was this formation, the formation that even his teacher deemed impossible to make, come into existence?

This formation only existed in theory.

Strangely enough this theoretical formation didn't require much calculation compared to the amount of power it had.

‘Formless Formation.’

The illusory formation that didn't have a form.

There was only one reason why this formation was a theoretical formation.

All formations in the world needed a core.

Normally, formation experts use precious and special materials as a core.

Cho Ryu Hyang did something similar, only that he used rocks to create cores.

The formless formation was something that was even more advanced than his current form of formations.

‘A formation that uses energy itself as a core.’

Once a person becomes a harmonious expert, they become able to make use of the energy in their surroundings.

This is the reason why they are able to kill experts from afar.

And here, Cho Ryu Hyang was able to use power that rivalled those of a harmonious expert’s.

Thanks to that, he was able to create the formless formation.

‘But.....’

Because it was a formation that used energy itself, the energy that it uses was tremendous.

This was because he had to continuously exert energy into the

formation till it came into existence.

At the same time, he had to use the Shura Environment, as well as the Moon Edge Blade Technique, which made his body extremely unstable.

Cho Ryu Hyang's body was in a very bad state.

But he still had work to do.

“Finish what you were doing. I'm looking forward to seeing what it is.”

Pian Mu was relaxed.

This child was not normal.

Actually, the child had already exceeded his expectations at this point.

His dislike for humans were almost completely destroyed thanks to the child.

After all, Cho Ryu Hyang had used multiple things that Pian Mu had never seen before, and he even managed to injure him.

It made Pian Mu look at humans with interest.

It was amazing, wasn't it?

Just the fact that the child still had much to show him excited him.

Cho Ryu Hyang looked down at the shapes that he was drawing, then sighed.

"I'm telling you this now, but you'll regret giving me this much time."

"That's what I'm looking forward to."

When Pian Mu said this with a grin on his face, Cho Ryu Hyang steadied his breath and spoke.

"I'll show you how dumb it is to give me time."

Not even Cho Ryu Hyang knew how dangerous his actions right now was.

But this was the only way to win against Pian Mu.

'A formation inside a formation.'

He was about to perform that nonsensical formation the imugi

showed him right now.

Cho Ryu Hyang's thought process began accelerating.

